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Crema; or, My Father's Sin.

CHAPTER XVII.
HARD AND SOFT.



BEFORE very long it was manifest enough that Mr. Gundry looked down upon Miss Sylvester with a large contempt. But while this raised my opinion of his judgment, it almost deprived me of a great relief, the relief of supposing that he wished his grandson to marry this Pennsylvania. For although her father, with his pigs and cattle, and a low sort of hostelry which he kept, could settle "a good pile of dollars" upon her, and had kept her at the "learnedest ladies' college" even in San Fran-

cisco, till he himself trembled at her erudition, still it was scarcely to be believed that a man of the Sawyer's strong common sense, and disregard of finery, would ever accept for his grandchild a girl made of affectation, vulgarity, and conceit. And one day quite in the early

spring, he was so much vexed with the fine lady's airs, that he left no doubt about his meaning.

Miss Sylvester was very proud of the figure she made on horseback; and having been brought up, perhaps as a child, to ride after pigs and so on, she must have had fine opportunities of acquiring a graceful style of horsemanship. And now she dashed through thick and thin in a most commanding manner, caring no more for a snowdrift than ladies do for a scraping of the road. No one with the least observation could doubt that this young woman was extremely anxious to attract Firm Gundry's notice; and therefore, on the day above spoken of, once more she rode over, with her poor father in waiting upon her, as usual.

Now I know very well how many faults I have, and to deny them has never been my practice; but this is the honest and earnest truth, that no smallness of mind, or narrowness of feeling, or want of large or fine sentiments, made me bolt my door when that girl was in the house. I simply refused, after seeing her once, to have anything more to say to her; by no means because of my birth and breeding (which are things that can be most easily waived, when the difference is acknowledged) nor yet on account of my being brought up in the company of ladies, nor even by reason of any dislike which her bold brown eyes put into me. My cause was sufficient, and just, and wise. I felt myself here as a very young girl, in safe, and pure, and honest hands, yet thrown on my own discretion, without any feminine guidance whatever. And I had learned enough from the wise French sisters, to know at a glance that Miss Sylvester was not a young woman who would do me good.

Even Uncle Sam, who was full of thought and delicate care about me, so far as a man can understand, and so far as his simple shrewdness went, in spite of all his hospitable ways, and open universal welcome, though he said not a word (as on such a point he was quite right in doing)—even he, as I knew by his manner, was quite content with my decision. But Firm, being young, and in many ways stupid, made a little grievance of it. And, of course, Miss Sylvester made a great one.

"Oh, I do declare, I am going away," through my open window I heard her exclaim in her sweetly affected tone, at the end of that long visit, "without even having the honour of saying a kind word to your young visitor. Do not wait for me, papa; I must pay my devoirs. Such a distinguished and travelled person can hardly be afflicted with *mauvaise honte*. Why does she not rush to embrace me? All the French people do; and she is so French. Let me see her, for the sake of my accent."

"We don't want no French here, ma'am," replied Uncle Sam, as Sylvester rode off, "and the young lady wants no Doctor Hunt. Her health is as good as your own, and you never catch no French actions from her. If she wanted to see you, she would a' come down."

"Oh now, this is too barbarous! Colonel Gundry, you are the most tyrannous man; in your own dominions an autocrat. Everybody says

so, but I never would believe it. Oh, don't let me go away with that impression. And you do look so good-natured!"

"And so I mean to look, Miss Penny, until you are out of sight."

The voice of the Sawyer was more dry than that of his oldest and rustiest saw. The fashionable and highly-finished girl had no idea what to make of him; but gave her young horse a sharp cut, to show her figure as she reined him: and then galloping off, she kissed her tan gauntlet with crimson network down it, and left Uncle Sam to revolve his rudeness, with the dash of the wet road scattered in the air.

"I wouldn't a' spoke to her so coarse," he said to Firm, who now returned from opening the gate and delivering his farewell, "if she wasn't herself so extra particular, gild me, and sky-blue my mouldings fine. How my mother would a' stared at the sight of such a gal! Keep free of her, my lad, keep free of her. But no harm to put her on, to keep our Missy alive and awake, my boy."

Immediately I withdrew from earshot, more deeply mortified than I can tell, and perhaps doing Firm an injustice by not waiting for his answer. I knew not then how lightly men will speak of such delicate subjects; and it set me more against all thoughts of Firm than a month's reflection could have done. When I came to know more of the world I saw that I had been very foolish. At the time, however, I was firmly set in a strong resolve to do that which alone seemed right, or even possible—to quit with all speed a place which could no longer be suited for me.

For several days I feared to say a single word about it, while equally I condemned myself, for having so little courage. But it was not as if there were anybody to help me, or tell me what to do; sometimes I was bold with a surety of right, and then again I shook with the fear of being wrong. Because, through the whole of it, I felt how wonderfully well I had been treated, and what a great debt I owed of kindness; and it seemed to be only a nasty little pride which made me so particular. And being so unable to settle for myself, I waited for something to settle it.

Something came, in a way which I had not by any means expected. I had told Suan Isco how glad I was that Firm had fixed his liking steadily upon Miss Sylvester. If any woman on earth could be trusted not to say a thing again, that one was this good Indian. Not only because of her provident habits, but also in right of the difficulty which encompassed her in our language. But she managed to get over both of these, and to let Mr. Ephraim know, as cleverly as if she had lived in drawing-rooms, whatever I had said about him. She did it for the best; but it put him in a rage, which he came at once to have out with me.

"And so, Miss Erema," he said, throwing down his hat upon the table of the little parlour, where I sat with an old book of Norman ballads; "I have your best wishes then, have I, for a happy marriage with Miss Sylvester!"

I was greatly surprised at the tone of his voice, while the flush on

his cheeks and the flash of his eyes, and even his quick heavy tread, showed plainly that his mind was a little out of balance. He deserved it, however, and I could not grieve.

"You have my best wishes," I replied demurely, "for any state of life to which you may be called. You could scarcely expect any less of me than that."

"How kind you are! But do you really wish that I should marry old Sylvester's girl?"

Firm, as he asked this question, looked so bitterly reproachful (as if he were saying, "Do you wish to see me hanged?") while his eyes took a form which reminded me so of the Sawyer in a furious puzzle, that it was impossible for me to answer as lightly as I meant to do.

"No, I cannot say, Firm, that I wish it at all; unless your heart is set on it——"

"Don't you know then where my heart is set?" he asked me in a deep voice, coming nearer, and taking the ballad-book from my hands. "Why will you feign not to know, Erema, who is the only one I can ever think of twice? Above me, I know, in every possible way—birth, and education, and mind, and appearance, and now far above me in money as well. But what are all these things? Try to think, if only you could like me. Liking gets over everything; and without it, nothing is anything. Why do I like you so, Erema? Is it because of your birth, and teaching, and manners, and sweet looks, and all that; or even because of your troubles?"

"How can I tell, Firm, how can I tell? Perhaps it is just because of myself. And why do you do it at all, Firm?"

"Ah, why do I do it? How I wish I knew; perhaps then I might cure it. To begin with, what is there, after all, so very wonderful about you?"

"Oh nothing, I should hope. Most surely nothing. It would grieve me to be at all wonderful. That I leave for American ladies."

"Now you don't understand me. I mean of course that you are wonderfully good and kind, and clever; and your eyes, I am sure, and your lips, and smile, and all your other features—there is nothing about them that can be called anything else but wonderful."

"Now, Firm, how exceedingly foolish you are! I did hope that you knew better."

"Erema, I never shall know better. I never can swerve or change, if I live to be a hundred-and-fifty. You think me presumptuous, no doubt, from what you are brought up to. And you are so young, that to seek to bind you, even if you loved me, would be an unmanly thing. But now you are old enough, and you know your own mind surely well enough, just to say, whether you feel as if you could ever love me as I love you."

He turned away, as if he felt that he had no right to press me so, and blamed himself for selfishness; and I liked him better for doing

that, than for anything he had done before. Yet I knew that I ought to speak clearly, and though my voice was full of tears, I tried.

"Dear Firm," I said, as I took his hand, and strove to look at him steadily, "I like and admire you very much; and by and by—by and by, I might—that is, if you did not hurry me. Of all the obstacles you have mentioned, none is worth considering. I am nothing but a poor castaway, owing my life to Uncle Sam and you. But one thing there is which could never be got over, even if I felt as you feel towards me. Never can I think of little matters, or of turning my thoughts to—to any such things as you speak of, as long as a vile reproach and wicked imputation lies on me. And before even that, I have to think of my father, who gave his life for me. Firm, I have been here too long delaying, and wasting my time in trifles. I ought to have been in Europe long ago. If I am old enough for what you talk of, I am old enough to do my duty. If I am old enough for love, as it is called, I am old enough for hate. I have more to do with hate than love, I think."

"Erema," cried Firm, "what a puzzle you are! I never even dreamed that you could be so fierce. You are enough to frighten Uncle Sam himself."

"If I frighten you, Firm, that is quite enough. You see now how vain it is to say another word."

"I do not see anything of the sort. Come back; and look at me quite calmly."

Being frightened at the way in which I had spoken, and having passed the prime of it, I obeyed him in a moment, and came up gently, and let him look at me, to his liking. For little as I thought of such things till now, I seemed already to know more about them, or at least to wonder—which is the stir of the curtain of knowledge. I did not say anything, but laboured to think nothing, and to look up with unconscious eyes. But Firm put me out altogether by his warmth, and made me flutter like a stupid little bird.

"My darling," he said, smoothing back my hair, with a kindness such as I could not resent, and quieting me with his clear blue eyes, "you are not fit for the stormy life to which your high spirit is devoting you. You have not the hardness and bitterness of mind, the cold self-possession and contempt of others, the power of dissembling and the iron will—in a word, the fundamental nastiness, without which you never could get through such a job. Why, you cannot be contemptuous even to me!"

"I should hope not. I should earn your contempt, if I could."

"There, you are ready to cry at the thought. Erema, do not mistake yourself. Remember that your father would never have wished it—would have given his life ten thousand times over, to prevent it. Why did he bring you to this remote, inaccessible part of the world, except to save you from further thought of evil? He knew that we listen to no rumours here, no social scandals, or malignant lies; but we value people as we find them. He meant this to be a haven for you; and so it shall

be, if you will only rest; and you shall be the queen of it. Instead of redressing his memory now, you would only distress his spirit. What does he care for the world's gossip now? But he does care for your happiness. I am not old enough to tell you things, as I should like to tell them. I wish I could—how I wish I could! It would make all the difference to me."

"It would make no difference, Firm, to me; because I should know it was selfishness. Not selfishness of yours, I mean, for you never could be selfish—but the vilest selfishness of mine, the same as starved my father. You cannot see things as I see them, or else you would not talk so. When you know that a thing is right, you do it. Can you tell me otherwise? If you did, I should despise you."

"If you put it so, I can say no more. You will leave us for ever, Erema?"

"No, not for ever. If the good God wills it, I will come back, when my work is done. Forgive me, dear Firm, and forget me."

"There is nothing to forgive, Erema. But a great deal I never can hope to forget."

CHAPTER XVIII.

OUT OF THE GOLDEN GATE.

LITTLE things, or what we call little, always will come in among great ones, or at least among those which we call great. Before I passed the Golden Gate, in the clipper ship *Bridal Veil* (so called from one of the Yosemite cascades) I found out what I had long wished to know, why Firm had a crooked nose. At least, it could hardly be called crooked, if anybody looked right at it. But still it departed from the bold straight line, which nature must have meant for it, everything else about him being as right as could be required. This subject had troubled me more than once; though, of course, it had nothing whatever to do with the point of view whence I regarded him.

Suan Isco could not tell me, neither could Martin of the mill; I certainly could not ask Firm himself, as the Sawyer told me to do, when once I put the question, in despair, to him. But now, as we stood on the wharf, exchanging farewells perhaps for ever, and tears of anguish were in my eyes, and my heart was both full and empty, ample and unexpected light was thrown on the curvature of Firm's nose.

For a beautiful girl, of about my own age and very nicely dressed, came up, and spoke to the Sawyer (who stood at my side), and then with a blush took his grandson's hand. Firm took off his hat to her very politely, but allowed her to see perhaps by his manner that he was particularly engaged just now; and the young lady, with a quick glance at me, walked off to rejoin her party. But a garrulous old negro servant, who seemed to be in attendance upon her, ran up and caught Firm by his coat, and peered up curiously at his face.

"How young Massa's poor nose dis long time? How him feel, spose now again?"—he inquired with a deferential grin. "Young Massa ebber able take a pinch of good snuff? He, he, Missy berry heavy den. Missy no learn to dance de nose polka den?"

"What on earth does he mean?" I could not help asking, in spite of our sorrowful farewell, as the negro went on with sundry other jokes and cackles at his own facetiousness. And then Uncle Sam, to divert my thoughts, while I waited for signal to say good-bye, told me how Firm got a slight twist to his nose.

Ephraim Gundry had been well taught, in all the common things a man should learn, at a good quiet school at "Frisco," which distinguished itself from all other schools by not calling itself a college. And when he was leaving, to begin home-life, with as much put into him as he could manage—for his nature was not bookish—when he was just seventeen years old, and tall, and straight, and upright, but not set into great bodily strength, which could not yet be expected, a terrible fire broke out in a great block of houses newly occupied, over against the school-house front. Without waiting for master's leave or matron's, the boys in the Californian style jumped over the fencing and went to help. And they found a great crowd collected, and flames flaring out of the top of the house. At the top of the house, according to a stupid and therefore general practice, was the nursery, made of more nurses than children, as often happens with rich people. The nurses had run away for their lives, taking two of the children with them; but the third, a fine little girl of ten, had been left behind, and now ran to the window, with red hot flames behind her. The window was open, and bars of fire, like serpent's tongues, played over it.

"Jump, child, jump, for God's sake, jump!" cried half a hundred people, while the poor scared creature quivered on the ledge, and shrank from the frightful depth below. At last, stung by a scorching volley, she gathered her nightgown tight, and leaped, trusting to the many faces and the many arms raised towards her. But though many gallant men were there, only one stood fast just where she fell, and that one was the youth, Firm Gundry. Upon him she fell, like a stone from heaven, and though he held up his arms, in the smoky glare, she came down badly. Badly at least for him, but as her father said, providentially. For one of her soles, or heels, alighted on the bridge of Ephraim's young nose. He caught her on his chest, and forgetful of himself, he bore her to her friends triumphantly, unharmed, and almost smiling. But the symmetry of an important part of his face was spoiled for ever.

When I heard of this noble affair, and thought of my own pusillanimous rendering—for verily I had been low enough, from rumours of Firm's pugnacity, to attribute these little defects of line to some fisticuffs with some miner—I looked at Firm's nose, through the tears in my eyes, and had a great mind not to go away at all. For what is the noblest of all things in man?—as I bitterly learned thereafter, and already

had some guesses—not the power of moving multitudes, with eloquence or by orders, not the elevation of one tribe through the lowering of others, nor even the imaginary lift of all, by sentiments as yet above them; there may be glory in all of these, but the greatness is not with them. It remains with those who behave like Firm, and get their noses broken.

However, I did not know those things, at that time of life, though I thought it right for every man to be brave and good; and I could not help asking who the young lady was, as if that were part of the heroism. The Sawyer, who never was unready for a joke, of however ancient quality, gave a great wink at Firm (which I failed to understand), and asked him how much the young lady was worth. He expected that Firm would say, "Five hundred thousand dollars"—which was about her value, I believe—and Uncle Sam wanted me to hear it; not that he cared a single cent himself, but to let me know what Firm could do.

Firm, however, was not to be led into any trap of that sort. He knew me better than the old man did, and that nothing would stir me to jealousy; and he quite disappointed the Sawyer.

"I have never asked what she is worth," he said, with a glance of contempt at money; "but she scarcely seems worth looking at, compared—compared with certain others."

In the distance I saw the young lady again, attempting no attraction, but walking along quite harmlessly, with the talkative negro after her. It would have been below me to pursue the subject, and I waited for others to reopen it; but I heard no more about her until I had been for more than a week at sea, and was able again to feel interest. Then I heard that her name was Annie Banks, of the firm of Heniker, Banks, & Co., who owned the ship I sailed in.

But now it was nothing to me who she was, or how beautiful, or how wealthy, when I clung for the last time to Uncle Sam, and implored him not to forget me. Over and over again he promised to be full of thoughts of me; even when the new mill was started, which would be a most trying time. He bowed his tall white head into my shevelled hair, and blessed and kissed me, although I never deserved it, and a number of people were looking on. Then I laid my hand in Firm's; and he did not lift it to his lips, or sigh, but pressed it long and softly, and looked into my eyes without a word. And I knew that there would be none to love like them, wherever I might go.

But the last of all to say "Good-by" was my beloved Jowler. He jumped into the boat after me (for we were obliged to have a boat, the ship having laden further down), and he put his forepaws on my shoulders, and whined, and drooped his under-jaw. And when he looked at me, as he used, to know whether I was in fun or earnest, with more expression in his bright brown eyes than any human being has, I fell back under his weight and sobbed, and could not look at any one.

We had beautiful weather and the view was glorious, as we passed

the Golden Gate, the entrance to what will one day be the capital of the world, perhaps. For, as our captain said, all power, and human energy and strength are always going westward; and when they come here they must stop, or else they would be going eastward again, which they never yet have done. His argument may have been right or wrong—and indeed it must have been one or the other—but who could think of such things now, with a grander thing than human power—human love fading away behind? I could not even bear to see the glorious mountains sinking, but ran below, and cried for hours, until all was dark and calm.

The reason for my sailing by this particular ship, and indeed rather suddenly, was that an old friend and Cornish cousin of Mr. Gundry, who had spent some years in California, was now returning to England by the *Bridal Veil*. This was Major Hockin, an officer of the British army, now on half-pay, and getting on in years. His wife was going home with him; for their children were married and settled in England, all but one now in San Francisco. And that one being well placed in the firm of Heniker, Banks, & Co., had obtained for his father and mother passage, upon favourable terms, which was as we say “an object to them.”

For the Major, though admirably connected (as his kinship to Colonel Gundry showed), and having a baronet not far off (if the twists of the world were set aside), also having served his country, and received a furrow on the top of his head, which made him brush his hair up, nevertheless, or all the more for that, was as poor as a British officer must be, without official sesame. How he managed to feed and teach a large and not clever family, and train them all to fight their way in a battle worse than any of his own, and make gentlemen and ladies of them, whatever they did or wherever they went, he only knew, and his faithful wife, and the Lord who helps brave poverty. Of such things he never spoke, unless his temper was aroused by luxury, and self-indulgence, and laziness.

But now he was a little better off, through having his children off his hands, and by means of a little property left him by a distant relative. He was on his way home to see to this; and a better man never returned to England, after always standing up for her.

Being a child in the ways of the world, and accustomed to large people, I could not make out Major Hockin at first, and thought him no more than a little man, with many peculiarities. For he was not so tall as myself, until he put his high-heeled boots on, and he made such a stir about trifles at which Uncle Sam would have only grunted, that I took him to be nothing more than a fidgety old campaigner. He wore a black-rimmed double eyeglass with blue side-lights at his temples, and his hat, from the shape of his forehead, hung back; he had narrow white wiry whiskers, and a Roman nose, and most prominent chin, and keen grey eyes with gingery brows, which contracted, like sharp little gables over them, whenever anything displeased him. Rosy cheeks, tight-drawn,

close-shaven, and gleaming with friction of yellow soap, added vigour to the general expression of his face, which was firm, and quick, and straightforward. The weather being warm, and the tropics close at hand, Major Hockin was dressed in a fine suit of Nankin, spruce and trim, and beautifully made, setting off his spare and active figure, which, though he was sixty-two years of age, seemed always to be ready for a game of leapfrog.

We were three days out of the Golden Gate, and the hills of the coast-ridge were faint and small, and the spires of the lower Nevada could only be caught when the hot haze lifted; and everybody lay about in our ship where it seemed to afford the least smell and heat; and nobody for a moment dreamed—for we really all were dreaming—of anybody with energy enough to be disturbed about anything, when Major Hockin burst in upon us all (who were trying not to be red-hot in the feeble shade of poop-awnings), leading by the hand an ancient woman, scarcely dressed with decency, and howling in a tone very sad to hear.

"This lady has been robbed!" cried the Major; "robbed, not fifteen feet below us. Robbed, ladies and gentlemen, of the most cherished treasures of her life, the portrait of her only son, the savings of a life of honest toil, her poor dead husband's tobacco-box, and a fine cut of Colorado cheese."

"Ten pounds and a quarter, gospel-true!" cried the poor woman, wringing her hands, and searching for any kind face among us.

"Go to the Captain," muttered one sleepy gentleman. "Go to the devil," said another sleepy man; "what have we to do with it?"

"I will neither go to the Captain," replied the Major, very distinctly, "nor yet to the devil, as a fellow who is not a man has dared to suggest to me——"

"All tied in my own pocket-handkerchief!" the poor old woman began to scream; "the one with the three-cornered spots upon 'un. Only two have I ever owned in all my life, and this were the very best of 'em. Oh dear, oh dear, that ever I should come to this exposing of my things!"

"Madam, you shall have justice done, as sure as my name is Hockin. Gentlemen and ladies, if you are not all asleep, how would you like to be treated so? Because the weather is a trifle warm, there you lie like a parcel of Mexicans. If anybody picked your pockets, would you have life enough to roll over?"

"I don't think I should," said a fat young Briton, with a very good-natured face; "but for a poor woman I can stand upright. Major Hockin, here is a guinea for her. Perhaps more of us will give a trifle."

"Well done!" cried the Major; "but not so much as that. Let us first ascertain all the rights of the case. Perhaps half-a-crown apiece would reach it."

Half-a-crown apiece would have gone beyond it, as we discovered

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afterwards; for the old lady's handkerchief was in her box, lost under some more of her property; and the tide of sleepy charity taking this direction under such vehement impulse, several other steerage passengers lost their goods, but found themselves too late in doing so. But the Major was satisfied, and the rude man who had told him to go amiss, begged his pardon, and thus we sailed on slowly and peaceably.

CHAPTER XIX.

INSIDE THE CHANNEL.

THAT little incident threw some light upon Major Hockin's character. It was not for himself alone that he was so particular, or, as many would call it, fidgety, to have everything done properly; for if anything came to his knowledge which he thought unfair to any one, it concerned him almost as much as if the wrong had been done to his own home self. Through this he had fallen into many troubles, for his impressions were not always accurate, but they taught him nothing; or rather, as his wife said, "the Major could not help it." The leading journals of the various places in which Major Hockin sojourned had published his letters of grievances sometimes, in the absence of the chief editor, and had suffered in purse by doing so. But the Major always said, "Ventilate it, ventilate the subject, my dear sir; bring public opinion to bear on it." And Mrs. Hockin always said that it was her husband to whom belonged the whole credit of this new and spirited use of the fine word "ventilation."

As betwixt this faithful pair, it is scarcely needful perhaps to say that the Major was the master. His sense of justice dictated that, as well as his general briskness. Though he was not at all like Mr. Gundry in undervaluing female mind, his larger experience and more frequent intercourse with our sex had taught him to do justice to us; and it was pleasant to hear him often defer to the judgment of ladies. But this he did more perhaps in theory than in practice; yet it made all the ladies declare to one another that he was a perfect gentleman. And so he was; though he had his faults; but his faults were such as we approve of.

But Mrs. Hockin had no fault in any way worth speaking of. And whatever she had was her husband's doing, through her desire to keep up with him. She was pretty, even now in her sixtieth year, and a great deal prettier because she never tried to look younger. Silver hair, and gentle eyes, and a forehead in which all the cares of eight children had scarcely imprinted a wrinkle, also a kind expression of interest in whatever was spoken of, with a quiet voice and smile, and a power of not saying too much at a time, combined to make this lady pleasant.

Without any fuss or declaration, she took me immediately under her care; and I doubt not that after two years passer' in the society of

Suan Isco and the gentle Sawyer, she found many things in me to amend, which she did by example and without reproof. She shielded me also in the cleverest way from the curiosity of the saloon, which at first was very trying. For the *Bridal Veil* being a well-known ship both for swift passages and for equipment, almost every berth was taken, and when the weather was calm, quite a large assembly sat down to dinner. Among these, of course, were some ill-bred people; and my youth and reserve, and self-consciousness, and so on, made my reluctant face the mark for many a long and searching gaze. My own wish had been not to dine thus in public; but hearing that my absence would only afford fresh grounds for curiosity, I took my seat between the Major and his wife, the former having pledged himself to the latter to leave everything to her management. His temper was tried more than once to its utmost—which was not a very great distance—but he kept his word, and did not interfere; and I having had some experience with Firm, eschewed all perception of glances. And as for all words, Mrs. Hockin met them with an obtuse obliqueness; so that after a day or two it was settled that nothing could be done about "Miss Wood."

It had been a very sore point to come to, and cost an unparalleled shed of pride, that I should be shorn of two-thirds of my name, and be called "Miss Wood," like almost anybody else. I refused to entertain such a very poor idea, and clung to the name which had always been mine—for my father would never depart from it—and I even burst into tears, which would, I suppose, be called "sentimental;" but still the stern fact stared me in the face—I must go as "Miss Wood," or not go at all. Upon this Major Hockin had insisted; and even Colonel Gundry could not move him from his resolution.

Uncle Sam had done his utmost, as was said before, to stop me from rushing to go at all; but when he found my whole heart bent upon it, and even my soul imperilled by the sense of neglecting life's chief duty, his own stern sense of right came in, and sided with my prayers to him. And so it was that he let me go, with pity for my youth and sex, but a knowledge that I was in good hands, and an inborn, perhaps "Puritanical" faith, that the Lord of all right would see to me.

The Major, on the other hand, had none of this. He differed from Uncle Sam as much as a trim-cut and highly-cultured garden-tree differs from a great spreading king of the woods. He was not without a strict sense of religion, especially when he had to march men to church; and he never even used a bad word, except when wicked facts compelled him. When properly let alone, and allowed to nurse his own opinions, he had a respectable idea that all things were certain to be ordered for the best; but nothing enraged him so much as to tell him that, when things went against him, or even against his predictions.

It was lucky for me, then, that Major Hockin had taken a most adverse view of my case. He formed his opinions with the greatest haste, and with the greatest perseverance stuck to them; for he was the most

generous of mankind, if generous means one quite full of his genus. And in my little case, he had made up his mind, that the whole of the facts were against me. "Fact," was his favourite word, and one which he always used with great effect; for nobody knows very well what it means, as it does not belong to our language. And so when he said that the facts were against me, who was there to answer that facts are not truth?

This fast-set conclusion of his was known to me, not through himself, but through his wife. For I could not yet bring myself to speak of the things that lay close at my heart to him; though I knew that he must be aware of them. And he, like a gentleman, left me to begin. I could often see that he was ready and quite eager to give me the benefit of his opinion, which would only have turned me against him, and irritated him perhaps with me. And having no home in England, or indeed, I might say, anywhere, I was to live with the Major and his wife, supposing that they could arrange it so, until I should discover relatives.

We had a long and stormy voyage, although we set sail so fairly; and I thought that we never should round Cape Horn in the teeth of the furious north-east winds; and after that we lay becalmed, I have no idea in what latitude, though the passengers now talked quite like seamen, at least till the sea got up again. However, at last we made the English Channel, in the dreary days of November, and after more peril there than anywhere else, we were safely docked at Southampton. Here the Major was met by two dutiful daughters, bringing their husbands and children, and I saw more of family-life (at a distance) than had fallen to my lot to observe before; and although there were many little jars and brawls and cuts at one another, I was sadly inclined to wish sometimes for some brothers and sisters to quarrel with.

But having none to quarrel with, and none to love, except good Mrs. Hockin, who went away by train immediately, I spent such a wretched time in that town, that I longed to be back in the *Bridal Veil* in the very worst of weather. The ooze of the shore and the reek of the water, and the dreary flatness of the land around (after the glorious heaven-clad heights, which made me ashamed of littleness), also the rough stupid stare of the men, when I went about as an American lady may freely do in America, and the sharpness of everybody's voice (instead of the genial tones which those who cannot produce them call "nasal," but which from a higher view are cordial)—taken one after other, or all together, these things made me think, in the first flush of thought, that England was not a nice country. After a little while, I found that I had been a great deal too quick; as foreigners are with things which require quiet comprehension. For instance, I was annoyed at having a stupid woman put over me, as if I could not mind myself—a cook, or a nurse, or housekeeper, or something very useful in the Hockin family, but to me a mere incumbrance, and (as I thought in my wrath sometimes), a spy. What was I likely to do, or what was any one likely to do to me, in a

thoroughly civilised country, that I could not even stay in private lodgings, where I had a great deal to think of, without this dull creature being forced upon me? But the Major so ordered it; and I gave in.

There I must have stayed for the slowest three months ever passed without slow starvation, finishing my growth, but not knowing how to "form my mind," as I was told to do. Major Hockin came down, once or twice, to see me; and though I did not like him, yet it was almost enough to make me do so, to see a little liveliness. But I could not and would not put up with a frightful German baron of music, with a polished card like a toast-rack, whom the Major tried to impress on me. As if I could stop to take music-lessons!

"Miss Wood," said Major Hockin, in his strongest manner, the last time he came to see me: "I stand to you *in loco parentis*. That means, with the duties, relationships, responsibilities, and what not, of the unfortunate—I should say rather of the beloved—parent deceased. I wish to be more careful of you, than of a daughter of my own. A great deal more careful, ten times, Miss Wood. I may say a thousand times more careful, because you have not had the discipline which a daughter of mine would have enjoyed. And you are so impulsive, when you take an idea. You judge everybody by your likings. That leads to error, error, error."

"My name is not Miss Wood," I answered; "my name is 'Erema Castlewood.' Whatever need may have been on board ship for nobody knowing who I am, surely I may have my own name now."

When anybody says "surely," at once up springs a question; nothing being sure, and the word itself at heart quite interrogative. The Major knew all those little things, which manage women so manfully. So he took me by the hand, and led me to the light, and looked at me.

I had not one atom of Russian twist, or dyed China-grass in my hair, or even the ubiquitous aid of horse and cow; neither in my face or figure was I conscious of false presentment. The Major was welcome to lead me to the light and to throw up all his spectacles, and gaze with all his eyes. My only vexation was with myself, because I could not keep the weakness—which a stranger should not see—out of my eyes; upon sudden remembrance, who it was that used to have the right to do such things to me. This it was, and nothing else, that made me drop my eyes perhaps.

"There, there, my dear!" said Major Hockin, in a softer voice than usual; "pretty fit you are to combat with the world, and defy the world, and brave the world, and abolish the world—or at least the world's opinion! 'Bo to a goose' you can say, my dear; but no 'bo' to a gander. No, no, do quietly what I advise—by-the-by, you have never asked my advice!"

I cannot have been hypocritical; for of all things I detest that most; but in good faith I said, being conquered by the Major's relaxation of his eyes—

"Oh, why have you never offered it to me? You knew that I never could ask for it."

For the moment he looked surprised, as if our ideas had gone cross-wise; and then he remembered many little symptoms of my faith in his opinions; which was now growing inevitable, with his wife and daughters, and many grandchildren—all certain that he was a Solomon.

"Erema," he said, "you are a dear good girl, though sadly, sadly, romantic. I had no idea that you had so much sense. I will talk with you, Erema, when we both have leisure."

"I am quite at leisure, Major Hockin," I replied; "and only too happy to listen to you."

"Yes, yes, I dare say. You are in lodgings. You can do exactly as you please. But I have a basin of ox-tail soup, a cutlet, and a woodcock waiting for me, at the Cosmopolitan Hotel. Bless me, I am five minutes late already! I will come and have a talk with you afterwards."

"Thank you," I said; "we had better leave it. It seems of no importance, compared—compared with——"

"My dinner!" said the Major; but he was offended, and so was I a little, though neither of us meant to vex the other.

CHAPTER XX.

BRUNTSEA.

It would be unfair to Major Hockin to take him for an extravagant man or a self-indulgent one, because of the good dinner he had ordered, and his eagerness to sit down to it. Through all the best years of his life he had been most frugal, abstemious, and self-denying, grudging every penny of his own expense, but sparing none for his family. And now, when he found himself so much better off, with more income and less outlay, he could not be blamed for enjoying good things, with the wholesome zest of abstinence.

For, coming to the point, and going well into the matter, the Major had discovered that the "little property" left to him, and which he was come to see to, really was quite a fine estate for any one who knew how to manage it, and would not spare courage and diligence. And of these two qualities he had such abundance, that without any outlet they might have turned him sour.

The property lately devised to him by his cousin, Sir Rufus Hockin, had long been far more plague than profit to that idle baronet. Sir Rufus hated all exertion, yet could not comfortably put up with the only alternative—extortion. Having no knowledge of his cousin Nick (except that he was indefatigable), and knowing his own son to be lazier even than himself had been, longing also to inflict even posthumous justice upon the land-agent, with the glad consent of his heir he left this

distant, fretful, and naked spur of land to his beloved cousin, Major Nicholas Hockin.

The Major first heard of this unexpected increase of his belongings while he was hovering, in the land of gold, between his desire to speculate and his dread of speculation. At once he consulted our Colonel Gundry, who met him by appointment at Sacramento; and Uncle Sam having a vast idea of the value of land in England, which the Major naturally made the most of, now being an English landowner, they spent a most pleasant evening, and agreed upon the line marked out by Providence.

Thus it was that he came home, bringing (by kind arrangement) me, who was much more trouble than comfort to him, and at first disposed to be cold and curt. And thus it was that I was left so long in that wretched Southampton, under the care of a very kind person who never could understand me. And all this while (as I ought to have known, without any one to tell me) Major Hockin was testing the value and beating the bounds of his new estate, and prolonging his dinner from one to two courses, or three if he had been travelling. His property was large enough to afford him many dinners, and rich enough (when rightly treated) to insure their quality.

Bruntsea is a quiet little village on the south-east coast of England, in Kent or in Sussex, I am not sure which; for it has a constitution of its own, and says that it belongs to neither. It used to be a place of size and valour, furnishing ships, and finding money for patriotic purposes. And great people both embarked and landed, one doing this and the other that; though nobody seems to have ever done both, if history is to be relied upon. The glory of the place is still preserved in a seal and an immemorial stick, each of which is blest with marks as incomprehensible as could be wished, though both are to be seen for sixpence. The name of the place is written in more than forty different ways, they say; and the oldest inhabitant is less positive than the youngest how to spell it.

This village lies in the mouth, or rather at the eastern end of the mouth, of a long and wide depression among the hills, through which a sluggish river wins its muddy consummation. This river once went far along the sea-brink, without entering (like a child who is afraid to bathe), as the Adur does at Shoreham, and as many other rivers do. And in those days, the mouth and harbour were under the cliff at Bruntsea; whence its seal and corporation, stick, and other blessings. But three or four centuries ago the river was drawn by a violent storm, like a badger from his barrel, and forced to come straight out and face the sea, without any three miles of dalliance. The time-serving water made the best of this, forsook its ancient bed (as classic nymphs and fountains used to do), and left poor Bruntsea with a dry bank, and no haven for a cockle-shell. A new port, such as it is, incrusts the fickle jaw of the river; piles were driven and earthworks formed, lest the water should

return to its old love, and Bruntsea, as concerned her traffic, became but a mark of memory. Her noble corporation never demanded their old channel, but regarded the whole as the will of the Lord, and had the good sense to insist upon nothing, except their time-honoured ceremonies.

In spite of all these and their importance, land became of no value there. The owner of the Eastern Manor and of many ancient rights, having no means of getting at them, sold them for an "old song," which they were; and the buyer was one of the Hockin race, a shipwrecked mariner from Cornwall, who had been kindly treated there, and took a fancy accordingly. He sold his share in some mine to pay for it, settled here, and died here; and his son, getting on in the world, built a house, and took to serious smuggling. In the chalk cliffs eastward he found holes of honest value to him, capable of cheap enlargement (which the Cornish holes were not), and much more accessible from France. Becoming a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant, he had the duty and privilege of inquiring into his own deeds, which enabled him to check those few who otherwise might have competed with him. He flourished, and bought more secure estates; and his son, for activity against smugglers, was made a gentle baronet.

These things now had passed away, and the first fee-simple of the Hockin family became a mere load and incumbrance. Sir George, and Sir Robert, and Sir Rufus, one after another, did not like the hints about contraband dealings which met them whenever they deigned to come down there, till at last the estate (being left to an agent) cost a great deal more than he ever paid in. And thus—as should have been more briefly told—the owner was our Major Hockin.

No wonder that this gentleman, with so many cares to attend to, had no time, at first, to send for me. And no wonder that when he came down to see me, he was obliged to have good dinners. For the work done by him in those three months surprised everybody except himself, and made in old Bruntsea a stir unknown since the time of the Spanish Armada. For he owned the house under the eastern cliff, and the warren, and the dairy farm inland, and the slope of the ground where the sea used to come, and fields where the people grew potatoes gratis, and all the eastern village, where the tenants paid their rents whenever they found it rational.

A hot young man, in a place like this, would have done a great deal of mischief. Either he would have accepted large views, and applauded this fine communism (if he could afford it, and had no wife), or else he would have rushed at everybody headlong, and butted them back to their abutments. Neither course would have created half the excitement which the Major's did. At least, there might have been more talk at first, but not a quarter so much in sum total. Of those things, however, there is time enough to speak, if I dare to say anything about them.

The things more to my mind (and therefore more likely to be made

plain to another mind) are not the petty flickering phantoms of the shadow we call human, and which alone we realise, and dwell inside it and upon it, as if it were all creation; but the infinitely nobler things of ever-changing but perpetual beauty, and no selfishness. These, without deigning to us even sense to be aware of them, shape our little minds and bodies, and our large self-importance, and fail to know when the lord, or king, who owns, is buried under them. To have perception of such mighty truths is good for all of us; and I never had keener perception of them than when I sat down on the Major's camp-stool, and saw all his land around me, and even the sea—where all the fish were his, as soon as he could catch them—and largely reflected that not a square foot of the whole world would ever belong to me.

"Bruntlands," as the house was called, perhaps from standing well above the sea, was sheltered by the curve of the eastern cliff, which looked down over Bruntsea. The cliff was of chalk, very steep towards the sea, and showing a prominent headland towards the south, but prettily rising in grassy curves from the inland and from the westward. And then where it suddenly chined away from land-slope into sea-front, a long bar of shingle began at right angles to it, and, as level as a railroad, went to the river's mouth, a league or so now to the westward. And beyond that another line of white cliffs rose, and looked well till they came to their headland. Inside this bank of shingle, from end to end, might be traced the old course of the river, and to landward of that trough at the hither end stood, or lay, the calm old village.

Forsaken as it was by the river, this village stuck to its ancient site and home, and instead of migrating contracted itself, and cast off needless members. Shrunk Bruntsea clung about the oldest of its churches, while the four others fell to rack and ruin, and settled into cow-yards and barns, and places where old men might sit and sigh. But Bruntsea distinctly and trenchantly kept the old town's division into east and west.

East Bruntsea was wholly in the Major's manor, which had a special charter; and most of the houses belonged to him. This ownership hitherto had meant only that the landlord should do all the tumble-down repairs (when the agent reported that they must be done), but never must enter the door for his rent. The borough had been disfranchised, though the snuggest of the snug for generations; and the freemen, thus being robbed of their rights, had no power to discharge their duties. And to complicate matters yet further, for the few who wished to simplify them, the custom of "borough-English" prevailed, and governed the descent of dilapidations, making nice niceties for clever men of law.

"You see a fine property here, Miss Wood," Major Hockin said to me, as we sat, on the day after I was allowed to come, enjoying the fresh breeze from the sea and the newness of the February air, and looking abroad very generally; "a very fine property, but neglected—

shamefully, horribly, atrociously—neglected, but capable of noble things, of grand things, of magnificent, with a trifle of judicious outlay !”

“Oh, please not to talk of outlay, my dear,” said good Mrs. Hockin, gently ; “it is such an odious word ; and where in the world is it to come from ?”

“Leave that to me. When I was a boy, my favourite copy in my copy-book was, ‘Where there’s a will, there’s a way.’ Miss Wood, what is your opinion ? But, wait, you must have time to understand the subject. First we bring a railway—always the first step ; why, the line is already made for it, by the course of the old river, and the distance from Newport three miles and a half. It ought not to cost quite 200*l*. a mile, the mere outlay for rails and sleepers. The land is all mine, and—and of course other landed proprietors’. Very well, these would all unite, of course ; so that not a farthing need be paid for land, which is the best half of the battle. We have the station here—not too near my house, that would never do—I could not bear the noise—but in a fine central place where nobody on earth could object to it—lively, and close at hand for all of them. Unluckily I was just too late. We have lost a parliamentary year through that execrable calm—you remember all about it. Otherwise we would have had Billy Puff stabled at Bruntsea by the first of May. But never mind ; we shall do it all the better and cheaper by taking our time about it. Very well, we have the railway opened, and the trade of the place developed. We build a fine terrace of elegant villas, a crescent also, and a large hotel replete with every luxury ; and we form the finest sea-parade in England by simply assisting nature. Half London comes down here to bathe, to catch shrimps, to flirt, and to do all the rest of it. We become a select, salubrious, influential, and yet economical place ; and then what do we do, Mrs. Hockin ?”

“My dear, how can I tell ? But I hope that we should rest and be thankful.”

“Not a bit of it. I should hope not, indeed. Erema, what do we do then ?”

“It is useless to ask me. Well, then, perhaps you set up a handsome sawmill ?”

“A sawmill ! What a notion of Paradise ! No, this is what we do—but remember that I speak in the strictest confidence ; dishonest antagonism might arise, if we ventilated our ideas too soon—Mrs. Hockin and Miss Wood, we demand the restoration of our river !—the return of our river to its ancient course.”

“I see,” said his wife ; “oh, how grand that would be ; and how beautiful from our windows ! That really, now, is a noble thought !”

“A just one—simply a just one. Justice ought not to be noble, my dear, however rare it may be. Generosity, magnanimity, heroism, and so on—those are the things we call noble, my dear.”

“And the founding of cities. Oh, my dear, I remember, when I was

at school, it was always said in what we called our histories, that the founders of cities had honours paid them, and altars built, and divinities done, and holidays held in their honour."

"To that I object," cried the Major, sternly. "If I founded fifty cities, I would never allow one holiday. The Sabbath is enough; one day in seven—fifteen per cent. of one's whole time; and twenty per cent. of your Sunday goes in church. Very right, of course, and loyal, and truly edifying—Mrs. Hockin's father was a clergyman, Miss Wood; and the last thing I would ever allow on my manor would be a dissenting chapel; but still I will have no new churches here, and a man who might go against me. They all want to pick their own religious views, instead of reflecting who supports them! It never used to be so; and such things shall never occur on my manor. A good hotel, attendance included, and a sound and moderate table d'hôte; but no church, with a popish bag sent round, and money to pay, without anything to eat."

"My dear, my dear," cried Mrs. Hockin, "I never like you to talk like that. You quite forget who my father was, and your own second son such a very sound priest!"

"A priest! don't let him come here," cried the Major; "or I'll let him know what tonsure is, and read him the order of Melchisedec. A priest! After going round the world three times, to come home and be hailed as the father of a priest! Don't let him come near me, or I'll sacrifice him."

"Now, Major, you are very proud of him," his good wife answered, as he shook his stick. "How could he help taking orders when he was under orders to do so? And his views are sound to the last degree, most strictly correct and practical—at least, except as to celibacy."

"He holds that his own mother ought never to have been born! Miss Wood, do you call that practical?"

"I have no acquaintance with such things," I replied; "we had none of them in California. But is it practical, Major Hockin—of course you know best in your engineering—I mean, would it not require something like a tunnel for the river and the railway to run on the same ground?"

"Why, bless me! That seems to have escaped my notice. You have not been with old Uncle Sam for nothing. We shall have to appoint you our chief engineer."

CHAPTER XXI.

LISTLESS.

It seemed an unfortunate thing for me, and unfavourable to my purpose, that my host, and even my hostess too, should be so engrossed with their new estate, its beauties and capabilities. Mrs. Hockin devoted herself at once to fowls and pigs and the like extravagant economies, having bought, at some ill-starred moment, a book which proved that hens

ought to lay eggs in a manner to support themselves, their families, and the family they belonged to, at the price of one penny a dozen. Eggs being two shillings a dozen in Bruntsea, here was a margin for profit—no less than two thousand per cent. to be made, allowing for all accidents. The lady also found another book, divulging for a shilling the author's purely invaluable secret—how to work an acre of ground, pay house-rent, supply the house grandly, and give away a barrow-load of vegetables every day to the poor of the parish, by keeping a pig—if that pig were kept properly. And after that, pork, and ham, and bacon came of him; while another golden pig went on.

Mrs. Hockin was very soft-hearted, and said that she never could make bacon of a pig like that; and I answered that if she ever got him it would be unwise to do so. However, the law was laid down in both books, that golden fowls and diamondic pigs must die the death before they begin to over-eat production; and the Major said, "To be sure. Yes, yes. Let them come to good meat, and then off with their heads." And his wife said that she was sure she could do it. When it comes to a question of tare and tret, false sentiment must be excluded.

At the moment, these things went by me as trifles, yet made me more impatient. Being older now, and beholding what happens with tolerance and complacence, I am only surprised that my good friends were so tolerant of me and so complacent. For I must have been a great annoyance to them, with my hurry and my one idea. Happily, they made allowance for me, which I was not old enough to make for them.

"Go to London, indeed! Go to London by yourself!" cried the Major, with a red face, and his glasses up, when I told him one morning that I could stop no longer without doing something. "Mary, my dear, when you have done out there, will you come in and reason—if you can—with Miss Wood? She vows that she is going to London, all alone."

"Oh, Major Hockin—oh, Nicholas dear, such a thing has happened!" Mrs. Hockin had scarcely any breath to tell us, as she came in through the window. "You know that they have only had three bushels, or, at any rate, not more than five, almost ever since they came. Erema, you know as well as I do."

"Seven and three quarter bushels of barley, at five and ninepence a bushel, Mary," said the Major, pulling out a pocket-book; "besides Indian corn, chopped meat, and potatoes!"

"And fourteen pounds of paddy," I said, which was a paltry thing of me; "not to mention a cake of graves, three sacks of brewers' grains, and then—I forget what next."

"You are too bad, all of you. Erema, I never thought you would turn against me so. And you made me get nearly all of it. But please to look here. What do you call this? Is this no reward? Is this not enough? Major, if you please, what do you call this? What a pity you have had your breakfast!"

"A blessing—if this was to be my breakfast. I call that, my dear,

the very smallest egg I have seen since I took sparrows' nests. No wonder they sell them at twelve a penny. I congratulate you upon your first egg, my dear Mary."

"Well, I don't care," replied Mrs. Hockin, who had the sweetest temper in the world. "Small beginnings make large endings; and an egg must be always small at one end. You scorn my first egg, and Erema should have had it, if she had been good. But she was very wicked, and I know not what to do with it."

"Blow it!" cried the Major. "I mean no harm, ladies. I never use low language. What I mean is, make a pin hole at each end, give a puff, and away goes two pennyworth, and you have a cabinet specimen, which your egg is quite fitted by its cost to be. But now, Mary, talk to Miss Wood, if you please. It is useless for me to say anything, and I have three appointments in the town"—he always called it "the town" now—"three appointments, if not four; yes, I may certainly say four. Talk to Miss Wood, my dear, if you please. She wants to go to London, which would be absurd. Ladies seem to enter into ladies' logic. They seem to be able to appreciate it better, to see all the turns—and the ins and outs, which no man has intellect enough to see, or at least to make head or tail of. Good-by for the present; I had better be off."

"I should think you had," exclaimed Mrs. Hockin, as her husband marched off, with his side-lights on, and his short, quick step, and well-satisfied glance at the hill which belonged to him, and the beach, over which he had rights of plunder—or, at least, Uncle Sam would have called them so, strictly as he stood up for his own.

"Now come and talk quietly to me, my dear," Mrs. Hockin began, most kindly, forgetting all the marvel of her first-born egg. "I have noticed how restless you are, and devoid of all healthy interest in anything. 'Listless' is the word. 'Listless' is exactly what I mean, Erema. When I was at your time of life, I could never have gone about caring for nothing. I wonder that you knew that I even had a fowl; much more how much they had eaten!"

"I really do try to do all I can, and that is a proof of it," I said. "I am not quite so listless as you think. But those things do seem so little to me."

"My dear, if you were happy, they would seem quite large, as, after all the anxieties of my life, I am able now to think them. It is a power to be thankful for; or, at least, I often think so. Look at my husband! He has outlived and outlasted more trouble than anyone, but myself, could reckon up to him; and yet he is as brisk, as full of life, as ready to begin a new thing to-morrow—when at our age there may be no to-morrow, except in that better world, my dear, of which it is high time for him and me to think; as I truly hope we may spare the time to do."

"Oh, don't talk like that," I cried. "Please, Mrs. Hockin, to think of your hens and chicks—at least there will be chicks by-and-by. I

am almost sure there will, if you only persevere. It seems unfair to set our minds on any other world, till justice has been done in this."

"You are very young, my child, or you would know that in that case we never should think of it at all. But I don't want to preach you a sermon, Erema, even if I could do so. I only just want you to tell me what you think, what good you imagine that you can do."

"It is no imagination. I am sure that I can right my father's wrongs. And I never shall rest till I do so."

"Are you sure that there is any wrong to right?" she asked in the warmth of the moment, and then, seeing perhaps how my colour changed, she looked at me sadly, and kissed my forehead.

"Oh, if you had only once seen him," I said; "without any exaggeration, you would have been satisfied at once. That he could ever have done any harm was impossible, utterly impossible. I am not as I was. I can listen to almost anything now quite calmly. But never let me hear such a wicked thing again."

"You must not go on like that, Erema, unless you wish to lose all your friends. No one can help being sorry for you. Very few girls have been placed as you are. I am sure when I think of my own daughters, I can never be too thankful. But the very first thing you have to learn, above all things, is to control yourself."

"I know it—I know it, of course," I said; "and I keep on trying my very best. I am thoroughly ashamed of what I said, and I hope you will try to forgive me."

"A very slight exertion is enough for that. But now, my dear, what I want to know is this—and you will excuse me if I ask too much. What good do you expect to get by going thus to London? Have you any friend there, anybody to trust, anything settled as to what you are to do?"

"Yes, everything is settled in my own mind," I answered very bravely; "I have the address of a very good woman, found among my father's papers, who nursed his children, and understood his nature, and always kept her faith in him. There must be a great many more who do the same, and she will be sure to know them and introduce me to them; and I shall be guided by their advice."

"But suppose that this excellent woman is dead, or not to be found, or has changed her opinion?"

"Her opinion she never could change. But if she is not to be found, I shall find her husband, or her children, or somebody. And besides that, I have a hundred things to do. I have the address of the agent through whom my father drew his income, though Uncle Sam let me know as little as he could. And I know who his bankers were—(when he had a bank), and he may have left important papers there."

"Come, that looks a little more sensible, my dear; bankers may always be relied upon. And there may be some valuable plate, Erema. But why not let the Major go with you? His advice is so invaluable."

"I know that it is, in all ordinary things. But I cannot have him now for a very simple reason. He has made up his mind about my dear father—horribly, horribly; I can't speak of it. And he never changes his mind; and sometimes when I look at him, I hate him."

"Erema, you are quite a violent girl, although you so seldom show it. Is the whole world divided then into two camps—those who think as you wish, and those who are led by their judgment to think otherwise? And are you to hate all who do not think as you wish?"

"No, because I do not hate you," I said; "I love you, though you do not think as I wish. But that is only because you think your husband must be right of course. But I cannot like those who have made up their minds, according to their own coldness."

"Major Hockin is not cold at all. On the contrary he is a warm-hearted man—I might almost say hot-hearted."

"Yes, I know he is. And that makes it ten times worse. He takes up everybody's case—but mine."

"Sad as it is, you almost make me smile," my hostess answered gravely; "and yet it must be very bitter for you, knowing how just and kind my husband is. I am sure that you will give him credit for at least desiring to take your part. And doing so, at least you might let him go with you, if only as a good protection."

"I have no fear of any one; and I might take him into society that he would not like. In a good cause he would go anywhere, I know. But in my cause, of course, he would be scrupulous. Your kindness I always can rely upon, and I hope in the end to earn his as well."

"My dear, he has never been unkind to you. I am certain that you never can say that of him. Major Hockin unkind to a poor girl like you!"

"The last thing I wish to claim is anybody's pity," I answered, less humbly than I should have spoken, though the pride was only in my tone perhaps. "If people choose to pity me, they are very good, and I am not at all offended, because—because they cannot help it perhaps, from not knowing anything about me. I have nothing whatever to be pitied for, except that I have lost my father, and have nobody left to care for me, except Uncle Sam in America."

"Your Uncle Sam, as you call him, seems to be a very wonderful man, Erema," said Mrs. Hockin, craftily, so far as there could be any craft in her; "I never saw him—a great loss on my part. But the Major went up to meet him somewhere, and came home with the stock of his best tie broken, and two buttons gone from his waistcoat. Does Uncle Sam make people laugh so much? Or is it that he has some extraordinary gift of inducing people to taste whisky? My husband is a very—most abstemious man, as you must be well aware, Miss Wood, or we never should have been as we are, I am sure. But, for the first time in all my life, I doubted his discretion, on the following day, when he had—

what shall I say?—when he had been exchanging sentiments with Uncle Sam!"

"Uncle Sam never takes too much in any way," I replied to this new attack; "he knows what he ought to take, and then he stops. Do you think that it may have been his 'sentiments,' perhaps, that were too strong and large for the Major?"

"Erema!" cried Mrs. Hockin, with amazement, as if I had no right to think or express my thoughts in life so early; "if you can talk politics at eighteen, you are quite fit to go anywhere. I have heard a great deal of American ladies, and seen not a little of them, as you know. But I thought that you called yourself an English girl, and insisted particularly upon it."

"Yes, that I do; and I have good reason. I am born of an old English family, and I hope to be no disgrace to it. But being brought up in a number of ways, as I have been without thinking of it, and being quite different from the fashionable girls Major Hockin likes to walk with——"

"My dear, he never walks with anybody but myself!"

"Oh yes, I remember! I was thinking of the deck. There are no fashionable girls here yet. Till the terrace is built, and the esplanade——"

"There shall be neither terrace, nor esplanade, if the Major is to do such things upon them."

"I am sure that he never would," I replied; "it was only their dresses that he liked at all, and that very, to my mind, extraordinary style, as well as unbecoming. You know what I mean, Mrs. Hockin, that wonderful—what shall I call it?—way of looping up?"

"Call me 'Aunt Mary,' my dear, as you did when the waves were so dreadful. You mean that hideous Mexican poncho, as they called it, stuck up here and going down there. Erema, what observation you have! Nothing ever seems to escape you. Did you ever see anything so indecorous?"

"It made me feel just as if I ought not to look at them," I answered, with perfect truth, for so it did; "I have never been accustomed to such things. But seeing how the Major approved of them, and liked to be walking up and down between them, I knew that they must be not only decorous, but attractive. There is no appeal from his judgment, is there?"

"I agree with him upon every point, my dear child; but I have always longed to say a few words about that. For I cannot help thinking that he went too far."

Hours in a Library.

XIV.—FIELDING'S NOVELS.

A DOUBLE parallel has often been pointed out between the two pairs of novelists who were most popular in the middle of our own and of the preceding century. The intellectual affinity which made Smollett the favourite author of Dickens is scarcely so close as that which commended Fielding to Thackeray. The resemblance between *Pickwick* and *Humphrey Clinker*, or between *David Copperfield* and *Roderick Random*, consists chiefly in the exuberance of animal spirits, the keen eye for external oddity, the consequent tendency to substitute caricature for portrait, and the vivid transformation of autobiography into ostensible fiction which are characteristic of both authors. Between Fielding and Thackeray the resemblance is closer. The peculiar irony of Jonathan Wild has its closest English parallel in Barry Lyndon. The burlesque in *Tom Thumb* of the Lee and Dryden school of tragedy may remind us of Thackeray's burlesques of Scott and Dumas. The characters of the two authors belong to the same family. *Vanity Fair* has grown more decent since the days of Lady Bellaston, but the costume of the actors has changed more than their nature. Rawdon Crawley would not have been surprised to meet Captain Booth in a sponging-house; Shandon and his friends preserved the old traditions of Fielding's Grub Street; Lord Steyne and Major Pendennis were survivals from the more congenial period of Lord Fellamar and Colonel James; and the two Amelias represent cognate ideals of female excellence. Or, to take an instance of similarity in detail, might not this anecdote from *The Covent Garden Journal* have rounded off a paragraph in the *Snob Papers*? A friend of Fielding saw a dirty fellow in a mudcart lash another with his whip, saying, with an oath, "I will teach you manners to your betters." Fielding's friend wondered what could be the condition of this social inferior of a mudcar-driver, till he found him to be the owner of a dustcart driven by asses. The great butt of Fielding's satire is, as he tells us, affectation; the affectation which he specially hates is that of straitlaced morality; Thackeray's satire is more generally directed against the particular affectation called snobbishness; but the evil principle attacked by either writer is merely one avatar of the demon assailed by the other.

The resemblance, which extends in some degree to style, might perhaps be shown to imply a very close intellectual affinity. I am content, however, to notice the literary genealogy as illustrative of the fact that

Fielding was the ancestor of one great race of novelists. "I am," he says expressly in *Tom Jones*, "the founder of a new province of writing." Richardson's *Clarissa** and Smollett's *Roderick Random* were indeed published before *Tom Jones*; but the provinces over which Richardson and Smollett reigned were distinct from the contiguous province of which Fielding claimed to be the first legislator. Smollett (who comes nearest) professed to imitate *Gil Blas* as Fielding professed to imitate Cervantes. Smollett's story inherits from its ancestry a reckless looseness of construction. It is a series of anecdotes strung together by the accident that they all happen to the same person. *Tom Jones*, on the contrary, has a carefully constructed plot, if not, as Coleridge asserts, one of the three best plots in existence (its rivals being *Ædipus Tyrannus* and *The Alchemist*). Its excellence depends upon the skill with which it is made subservient to the development of character and the thoroughness with which the working motives of the persons involved have been thought out. Fielding claims—even ostentatiously—that he is writing a history, not a romance; a history not the less true because all the facts are imaginary; for the fictitious incidents serve to exhibit the most general truths of human character. It is by this seriousness of purpose that his work is distinguished from the old type of novel, developed by Smollett, which is but a collection of amusing anecdotes; or from such work as De Foe's, in which the external facts are given with an almost provoking indifference to display of character and passion. Fielding's great novels have a true organic unity as well as a consecutive story, and are intended in our modern jargon as genuine studies in physiological analysis.†

Johnson, no mean authority when in his own sphere and free from personal bias, expressly traversed this claim; he declared that there was more knowledge of the human heart in a letter of *Clarissa* than in the whole of *Tom Jones*; and said more picturesquely, that Fielding could tell the hour by looking at the dial-plate, whilst Richardson knew how the clock was made. It is tempting to set this down as a Johnsonian prejudice, and to deny or retort the comparison. Fielding, we might say, paints flesh and blood; whereas Richardson consciously constructs his puppets out of frigid abstractions. Lovelace is a bit of mechanism; Tom Jones a human being. In fact, however, such comparisons are misleading. Nothing is easier than to find an appropriate ticket for the objects of our criticism, and summarily pigeon-hole Richardson as an idealist and Fielding as a realist; Richardson as subjective and morbid; Fielding as objective and full of coarse health; or to attribute to either of them the deepest knowledge of the human heart. These are the mere

* Richardson wrote the first part of *Pamela* between November 10, 1739, and January 10, 1740. *Joseph Andrews* appeared in 1742. The first four volumes of *Clarissa Harlowe* and *Roderick Random* appeared in the beginning of 1748; *Tom Jones* in 1749.

† See some appreciative remarks upon this in Scott's preface to the *Monastery*.

banalities of criticism ; and I can never hear them without a suspicion that a professor of aesthetics is trying to hoodwink me by a bit of technical platitude. The cant phrases which have been used so often by panegyrists too lazy to define their terms, have become almost as meaningless as the complimentary formulæ of society.

Knowledge of the human heart in particular is a phrase which covers very different states of mind. It may mean that power by which the novelist or dramatist identifies himself with his characters ; sees through their eyes and feels with their senses : it is the product of a rich nature, a vivid imagination, and great powers of sympathy, and draws a comparatively small part of its resources from external experience. The novelist knows how his characters would feel under given conditions, because he feels it himself ; he sees from within, not from without ; and is almost undergoing an actual experience instead of condensing his observations on life. This is the power in which Shakspeare is supreme ; which Richardson proved himself, in his most powerful passages, to possess in no small degree ; and which in Balzac seems to have generated fits of absolute hallucination.

Fielding is not devoid of this power, as no great imaginative work can be possible without it ; but the knowledge for which he is specially conspicuous differs almost in kind. This knowledge is drawn from observation rather than intuitive sympathy. It consists in great part of those weighty maxims which a man of keen powers of observation stores up in his passage through a varied experience. It is the knowledge of Ulysses, who has known—

Cities of men

And manners, climates, councils, governments ;

the knowledge of a Machiavelli, who has looked behind the screen of political hypocrisies ; the knowledge of which the essence is distilled in Bacon's *Essays* ; or the knowledge of which Polonius seems to have retained many shrewd scraps even when he had fallen into his dotage. In reading *Clarissa* or *Eugénie Grandet* we are aware that the soul of Richardson or Balzac has transmigrated into another shape ; that the author is projected into his character, and is really giving us one phase of his own sentiments. In reading Fielding we are listening to remarks made by a spectator instead of an actor ; we are receiving the pithy recollections of the man about town ; the prodigal who has been with scamps in gambling-houses, and drunk beer in pothouses and punch with country squires ; the keen observer who has judged all characters, from Sir Robert Walpole down to Betsy Canning ;* who has fought the hard battle of life with unflagging spirit, though with many falls ; and who, in spite of serious stains, has preserved the goodness of his heart and the

* Fielding blundered rather strangely in the celebrated Betsy Canning case, as Balzac did in the *Affaire Peytel* ; but the story is too long for repetition in this place.

soundness of his head. The experience is generally given in the shape of typical anecdotes rather than in explicit maxims; but it is not the less distinctly the concentrated essence of observation, rather than the spontaneous play of a vivid imagination. Like Balzac, Fielding has portrayed the *Comédie Humaine*; but his imagination has never overpowered the coolness of his judgment. He shows a superiority to his successor in fidelity almost as marked as his inferiority in vividness. And, therefore, it may be said in passing, it is refreshing to read Fielding at a time when this element of masculine observation is the one thing most clearly wanting in modern literature. Our novels give us the emotions of young ladies, which, in their way, are very good things; they reflect the sentimental view of life, and the sensational view, and the common-place view, and the high philosophical view. One thing they do not tell us. What does the world look like to a shrewd police-magistrate, with a keen eye in his head and a sound heart in his bosom? It might be worth knowing. Perhaps (who can tell?) it would still look rather like Fielding's world.

The peculiarity is indicated by Fielding's method. Scott, who, like Fielding, generally describes from the outside, is content to keep himself in the back ground. "Here," he says to his readers, "are the facts; make what you can of them." Fielding will not efface himself; he is always present as chorus; he tells us what moral we ought to draw; he overflows with shrewd remarks, given in their most downright shape, instead of obliquely suggested through the medium of anecdote; he likes to stop us as we pass through his portrait-gallery; to take us by the button-hole and expound his views of life and his criticisms on things in general. His remarks are often so admirable that we prefer the interpolations to the main current of narrative. Whether this plan is the best must depend upon the idiosyncrasy of the author; but it goes some way to explain one problem, over which Scott puzzles himself, namely, why Fielding's plays are so inferior to his novels. There are other reasons, external and internal; but it is at least clear that a man who can never retire behind his puppets is not in the dramatic frame of mind. He is always lecturing where a dramatist must be content to pull the wires. Shakspeare is really as much present in his plays as Fielding in his novels; but he does not let us know it; whereas the excellent Fielding seems to be quite incapable of hiding his broad shoulders and lofty stature behind his little puppet-show.

There are, of course, actors in Fielding's world who can be trusted to speak for themselves. Tom Jones, at any rate, who is Fielding in his youth, or Captain Booth, who is the Fielding of later years, are drawn from within. Their creator's sympathy is so close and spontaneous that he has no need of his formulæ and precedents. But elsewhere he betrays his method by his desire to produce his authority. You will find the explanation of a certain line of conduct, he says, in "human nature, page almost the last." He is a little too fond of taking down that volume with a flourish; of exhibiting his familiarity with its pages, and referring

to the passages which justify his assertions. Fielding has an odd touch of the pedant. He is fond of airing his classical knowledge; and he is equally fond of quoting this imaginary code which he has had to study so thoroughly and painfully. The effect, however, is to give an air of artificiality to some of his minor characters. They show the traces of deliberate composition too distinctly, though the blemish may be forgiven in consideration of the genuine force and freshness of his thinking. If manufactured articles, they are not second-hand manufactures. His knowledge, unlike that of the good Parson Adams, comes from life, not books.

The worldly wisdom for which Fielding is so conspicuous had indeed been gathered in doubtful places, and shows traces of its origin. He had been forced, as he said, to choose between the positions of a hackney coachman and of a hackney writer. "His genius," said Lady M. W. Montague, who records the saying, "deserves a better fate." Whether it would have been equally fertile, if favoured by more propitious surroundings, is one of those fruitless questions which belongs to the boundless history of the might-have-beens. But one fact requires to be emphasised. Fielding's critics and biographers have dwelt far too exclusively upon the uglier side of his Bohemian life. They have presented him as yielding to all the temptations which can mislead keen powers of enjoyment, when the purse is one day at the lowest ebb and the next overflowing with the profits of some lucky hit at the theatre. Those unfortunate yellow liveries which contributed to dissipate his little fortune have scandalised posterity as they scandalised his country neighbours. He has come to be one of the examples of that sagacious school who hold that a man of genius ought to be a scamp. But it is essential to remember that the history of the Fielding of later years, the Fielding to whom we owe the novels, is the record of a manful and persistent struggle to escape from the mire of Grub Street. During that period he was studying the law with the energy of a young student; redeeming the office of magistrate from the discredit into which it had fallen in the hands of fee-hunting predecessors; considering seriously, and making practical proposals to remedy, the evils which then made the lowest social strata a hell upon earth; sacrificing his last chances of health and life to put down with a strong hand the robbers who then infested the streets of London; and clinging with affection to his wife and children. He never got fairly clear of that lamentable slough of despond into which his follies had plunged him. His moral tone lost what delicacy it had once possessed; he had not the strength which enabled Johnson to gain elevation even from the temptations which then beset the unlucky "author by profession." Some literary hacks of the day escaped only by selling themselves, body and soul; others sank into misery and vice, like poor Boyce, a fragment of whose poem has been preserved by Fielding, and who appears in literary history scribbling for pay in a sack arranged to represent a shirt. Fielding never let go his hold of the firm hand,

though he must have felt through life like one whose feet are always plunging into a hopeless quagmire. To describe him as a mere reckless Bohemian is to overlook the main facts of his story. He was manly to the last, not in the sense in which man means animal; but with the manliness of one who struggles bravely to redeem early errors, and who knows the value of independence, purity, and domestic affection. The scanty anecdotes which do duty for his biography reveal little of his true life. We know indeed, from a spiteful and obviously exaggerated story of Horace Walpole's, that he once had a very poor supper in doubtful company; and from another anecdote, of slightly apocryphal flavour, that he once gave to "friendship" the money which ought to have been given to the collector of rates. But really to know the man, we must go to his books.

What did Fielding learn of the world which had treated him so roughly? That the world must be composed of fools because it did not bow before his genius, or of knaves because it did not reward his honesty? Men of equal ability have drawn both those and the contradictory conclusions from experience. Human nature, as philosophers assure us, varies little from age to age; but the pictures drawn by the best observers vary so strangely as to convince us that a portrait depends as much upon the artist as upon the sitter. One can see nothing but the baser, and another nothing but the nobler, passions. To one the world is like a masque representing the triumph of vice; and another placidly assures us that virtue is always rewarded by peace of mind, and that even the temporary prosperity of the wicked is an illusion. On one canvas we see a few great heroes stand out from a multitude of pygmies; on its rival, giants and dwarfs appear to have pretty much the same stature. The world is a scene of unrestrained passions, impelling their puppets into collision or alliance without intelligible design; or a scene of domestic order, where an occasional catastrophe interferes as little with ordinary lives as a comet with the solar system. Blind fate governs one world of the imagination, and beneficent Providence another. The theories embodied in poetry vary as widely as the philosophies on which they are founded; and to philosophise is to declare the fundamental assumptions of half the wise men of the world to be transparent fallacies.

We need not here attempt to reconcile these apparent contradictions. As little need we attempt to settle Fielding's philosophy, for it resembles the snakes in Iceland. It seems to have been his opinion that philosophy is, as a rule, a fine word for humbug. That was a common conviction of his day; but his acceptance of it doubtless indicates the limits of his power. In his pages we have the shrewdest observation of man in his domestic relations; but we scarcely come into contact with man as he appears in presence of the infinite, and therefore with the deepest thoughts and loftiest imaginings of the great poets and philosophers. Fielding remains inflexibly in the regions of common-sense and every-day experience. But

he has given an emphatic opinion of that part of the world which was visible to him, and it is one worth knowing. In a remarkable conversation, reported in Boswell, Burke and Johnson, two of the greatest of Fielding's contemporaries, seem to have agreed that they had found men less just and more generous than they could have imagined. People begin by judging the world from themselves, and it is therefore natural that two men of great intellectual power should have expected from their fellows a more than average adherence to settled principles. Thus Johnson and Burke discovered that reason, upon which justice depends, has less influence than a young reasoner is apt to fancy. On the other hand, they discovered that the blind instincts by which the mass is necessarily guided are not so bad as they are represented by the cynics who have concentrated their experience into the one maxim, Keep your pockets buttoned. In spite of much that has been said, that kind of wisdom is very easily learnt, and is more often the product of the premature wisdom affected by youth than of a ripened judgment. Good-hearted men, like Johnson and Burke, shake off cynicism whilst others are acquiring it.

Fielding's verdict seems to differ at first sight. He undoubtedly lays great stress upon the selfishness of mankind. He seldom admits of an apparently generous action without showing its alloy of selfish motive, and sometimes showing that it is a mere cloak for selfish motives. In a characteristic passage of his *Voyage to Lisbon* he applies his theory to his own case. When the captain falls on his knees, he will not suffer a brave man and an old man to remain for a moment in that posture, but forgives him at once. He hastens, however, utterly to disclaim all praise, on the ground that his true motive was simply the convenience of forgiveness. "If men were wiser," he adds, "they would be oftener influenced by that motive." This kind of inverted hypocrisy, which may be graceful in a man's own case (for nobody will doubt that Fielding was less guided by calculation than he asserts), is not so graceful when applied to his neighbours. And perhaps some readers may hold that Fielding pitches the average strain of human motive too low. I should rather surmise that he substantially agrees with Johnson and Burke. The selfishness of most men's actions is one of the primary data of life. It is a thing at which we have no more right to be astonished than at the fact that even saints and martyrs have to eat and drink like other persons, or that a sound digestion is the foundation of much moral excellence. It is one of those facts which people of a romantic turn of mind may choose to overlook, but which no honest observer of life can seriously deny. Our conduct is determined through some thirty points of the compass by our own interest; and, happily, through at least nine-and-twenty of those points is rightfully so determined. Each man is forced, by an unavoidable necessity, to look after his own and his children's bread and butter, and to spend most of his efforts on that innocent end. So long as he does not pursue his interests wrongfully, nor remain dead to other calls

when they happen, there is little cause for complaint, and certainly there is none for surprise.

Fielding recognises, but never exaggerates, this homely truth. He has a hearty and generous belief in the reality of good impulses, and the existence of thoroughly unselfish men. The main actors in his world are not, as in Balzac's, mere hideous incarnations of selfishness. The superior sanity of his mind keeps him from nightmares, if its calmness is unfavourable to lofty visions. With Balzac women like Lady Bellaston become the rule instead of the exception, and their evil passions are the dominant forces in society. Fielding, though he recognises their existence, tells us plainly that they are exceptional. Society, he says, is as moral as ever it was, and given more to frivolity than to vice*—a statement judiciously overlooked by some of the critics who want to make "graphic" history out of his novels. Fielding's mind had gathered coarseness, but it had not been poisoned. He sees how many ugly things are covered by the superficial gloss of fashion, but he does not condescend to travesty the facts in order to gratify a morbid taste for the horrible. When he wants a good man or woman he knows where to find them, and paints from Allen or his own wife with obvious sincerity and hearty sympathy. He is less anxious to exhibit human selfishness than to show us that an alloy of generosity is to be found even amidst base motives. Some of his happiest touches are illustrations of this doctrine. His villains (with a significant exception) are never monsters. They have some touch of human emotion. No desert, according to him, is so bare but that some sweet spring blends with its brackish waters. His grasping landladies have genuine movements of sympathy; and even the scoundrelly Black George, the gamekeeper, is anxious to do Tom Jones a good turn, without risk, of course, to his own comfort, by way of compensation for previous injuries. It is this impartial insight into the ordinary texture of human motive that gives a certain solidity and veracity to Fielding's work. We are always made to feel that the actions spring fairly and naturally from the character of his persons, not from the exigencies of his story or the desire to be effective. The one great difficulty in *Tom Jones* is the assumption that the excellent Allworthy should have been deceived for years by the hypocrite Blifil, and blind to the substantial kindness of his ward. Here we may fancy that Fielding has been forced to be unnatural by his plot. Yet he suggests a satisfactory solution with admirable skill. Allworthy is prejudiced in favour of Blifil by the apparently unjust prejudice of Blifil's mother in favour of the jovial Tom. A generous man may easily become blind to the faults of a supposed victim of maternal injustice; and even here Fielding fairly escapes from the blame due to ordinary novelists who invent impossible misunderstandings in order to bring about intricate perplexities.

* See *Tom Jones*, book xiv. chap. i.

Blifil is perhaps the one case (for Jonathan Wild is a satire, not a history, or, as M. Taine fancies, a tract) in which Fielding seems to lose his unvarying coolness of judgment; and the explanation is obvious. The one fault to which he is, so to speak, unjust, is hypocrisy. Hypocrisy, indeed, cannot well be painted too black, but it should not be made impossible. When Fielding has to deal with such a character he for once loses his self-command, and, like inferior writers, begins to be angry with his creatures. Instead of analysing and explaining, he simply reviles and leaves us in presence of a moral anomaly. Blifil is not more wicked than Iago, but we seem to understand the psychical chemistry by which an Iago is compounded; whereas Blifil can only be regarded as a devil (if the word be not too dignified) who does not really belong to this world at all. The error, though characteristic of a man whose great intellectual merit is his firm grasp of realities and whose favourite virtue is his downright sincerity, is not the less a blemish. Hatred of pedantry too easily leads to hatred of culture, and hatred of hypocrisy to distrust of the more exalted virtues. Fielding cannot be just to motives lying rather outside his ordinary sphere of thought. He can mock heartily and pleasantly enough at the affectation of philosophy, as in the case where Parson Adams, urging poor Joseph Andrews, by considerations drawn from the Bible and from Seneca, to be ready to resign his Fanny "peaceably, quietly, and contentedly," suddenly hears of the supposed loss of his own little child, and is called upon to act instead of preaching. But his satire upon all characters and creeds which embody the more exalted strains of feeling is apt to be indiscriminate. A High Churchman, according to him, is a Pharisee who prefers orthodoxy to virtue; a Methodist a mere mountebank, who counterfeits spiritual raptures to impose upon dupes; a Freethinker is a man who weaves a mask of fine phrases, under which to cover his aversion to the restraints of religion. Fielding's religion consists chiefly of a solid homespun morality, and he is more suspicious of an excessive than of a defective zeal. Similarly he is a hearty Whig, but no revolutionist. He has as hearty a contempt for the cant about liberty* as Dr. Johnson himself, and has very stringent remedies to propose for regulating the mob. The bailiff in *Amelia*, who, whilst he brutally maltreats the unlucky prisoners for debt, swaggers about the British Constitution, and swears that he is "all for liberty," recalls the boatman who ridiculed French slavery to Voltaire, and was carried off next day by a pressgang. Fielding, indeed, is no fanatical adherent of our blessed Constitution, which, as he says, has been pronounced by some of our wisest men to be too perfect to be altered in any particular, and which a number of the said wisest men have been mending ever since. He hates cant on all sides impartially, though, as a sound Whig, he specially hates Papists and Jacobites as the most offensive of all Pharisees,

* See *Voyage to Lisbon* (July 21st) for some very good remarks upon this word, which, as he says, no two men understand in the same sense.

marked for detestation by their taste for frogs and French wine in preference to punch and roast beef. He is a patriotic Briton, whose patriotism takes the genuine shape of a hearty growl at English abuses, with a tacit assumption that things are worse elsewhere.

The reflection of this quality of solid good sense, absolutely scorning any alimient except that of solid facts, is the so-called realism of Fielding's novels. He is, indeed, as hearty a realist as Hogarth, whose congenial art he is never tired of praising with all the cordiality of his nature, and to whom he refers his readers for portraits of several characters in *Tom Jones*. His scenery is as realistic as a photograph. Tavern kitchens, sponging-house parlours, the back-slums of London streets, are drawn from the realities with unflinching vigour. We see the stains of beer-pots and smell the fumes of stale tobacco as distinctly as in Hogarth's engravings. He shrinks neither from the coarse nor the absolutely disgusting. It is enough to recall the female boxing or scratching matches which are so frequent in his pages. On one such occasion his language seems to imply that he had watched such battles in the spirit of a connoisseur in our own day watching less inexpressibly disgusting prize-fights. Certainly we could wish that, if such scenes were to be depicted, there might have been a clearer proof that the artist had a nose and eyes capable of feeling offence.

But the nickname "realist" slides easily into another sense. The realist is sometimes supposed to be more shallow as well as more prosaic than the idealist; to be content with the outside where the idealist pierces to the heart. He gives the bare fact, where his rival gives the idea symbolized by the fact, and therefore rendering it attractive to the higher intellect. Fielding's view of his own art is instructive in this as in other matters. Poetic invention, he says, is generally taken to be a creative faculty; and if so, it is the peculiar property of the romance writers, who frankly take leave of the actual and possible. Fielding disavows all claim to this faculty; he writes histories not romances. But, in his sense, poetic invention means, not creation, but "discovery;" that is, "a quick, sagacious penetration into the true essence of all objects of our contemplation." Perhaps we may say that it is chiefly a question of method whether a writer should portray men or angels; the beings, that is, of everyday life or beings placed under a totally different set of circumstances. The more vital question is whether, by one method or the other, he shows us a man's heart or only his clothes, whether he appeals to our intellects or imaginations, or amuses us by images which do not sink below the eye. In scientific writings a man may give us the true law of a phenomenon, whether he exemplifies it in extreme or average cases, in the orbit of a comet or the fall of an apple. The romance writer should show us what real men would be in dreamland, the writer of "histories" what they are on the knife-board of an omnibus. True insight may be shown in either case, or may be absent in either, according as the artist deals with the deepest organic

laws or the more external accidents. The *Ancient Mariner* is an embodiment of certain simple emotional phases and moral laws amidst the phantasmagoric incidents of a dream, and De Foe does not interpret them better because he confines himself to the most prosaic incidents. When romance becomes really arbitrary, and is parted from all basis of observation, it loses its true interest and deserves Fielding's condemnation. Fielding conscientiously aims at discharging the highest function. He describes, as he says in *Joseph Andrews*, "not men, but manners; not an individual, but a species." His lawyer, he tells us, has been alive for the last four thousand years, and will probably survive four thousand more. Mrs. Tow-wouse lives wherever turbulent temper, avarice, and insensibility are united; and her sneaking husband wherever a good inclination has glimmered forth, eclipsed by poverty of spirit and understanding. But the type which shows best the force and the limits of Fielding's genius is Parson Adams. He belongs to a distinguished family, whose members have been portrayed by the greatest historians. He is a collateral descendant of Don Quixote, for whose creation Fielding felt a reverence exceeded only by his reverence for Shakspeare.* The resemblance is, of course, distant, and consists chiefly in this, that the parson, like the knight, lives in an ideal world, and is constantly shocked by harsh collision with facts. He believes in his sermons instead of his sword, and his imagination is tenanted by virtuous squires and model parsons instead of Arcadian shepherds, or knight-errants and fair ladies. His imagination is not exalted beyond the limits of sanity, but only colours the prosaic realities in accordance with the impulses of a tranquil benevolence. If the theme be fundamentally similar, it is treated with a far less daring hand.

Adams is much more closely related to Sir Roger de Coverley, the Vicar of Wakefield, or Uncle Toby. Each of these loveable beings invites us at once to sympathise with and to smile at the unaffected simplicity which, seeing no evil, becomes half ludicrous and half pathetic in this corrupt world. Adams stands out from his brethren by his intense

* In his interesting *Life of Godwin*, Mr. Paul claims for his hero (I believe rightly) that he was the first English writer to give a "lengthy and appreciative notice" of *Don Quixote*. But when he infers that Godwin was also the first English writer who recognised in Cervantes a "great humorist, satirist, moralist, and artist, he seems to me to overlook Fielding and perhaps others. Fielding's frequent references to *Don Quixote* (to say nothing of his play, *Don Quixote in England*) imply "an admiration fully as warm as that of Godwin. *Don Quixote*, says Fielding, for example, is more worthy the name of history than Mariana, and he always speaks of Cervantes in the tone of an affectionate disciple. Fielding, I will add, seems to me to have admired Shakspeare more heartily and intelligently than ninety-nine out of a hundred modern supporters of Shakspeare societies; though these gentlemen are never happier than when depreciating English eighteenth-century critics to exalt vapid German philosophising. Fielding's favourite play seems from his quotations to have been *Othello*.

reality. If he smells too distinctly of beer and tobacco we believe in him more firmly than in the less full-blooded creations of Sterne and Goldsmith. Parson Adams, indeed, has a startling vigour of organisation. Not merely the hero of a modern ritualist novel, but Amyas Leigh or Guy Livingstone himself might have been amazed at his athletic prowess. He stalks ahead of the stage-coach (favoured doubtless by the bad roads of the period) as though he had accepted the modern principle about fearing God and walking a thousand miles in a thousand hours. His mutton fist and the crabtree cudgel which swings so freely round his clerical head would have daunted the contemporary gladiators, Slack and Broughton. He shows his Christian humility not merely by familiarity with his poorest parishioners, but in sitting up whole nights in tavern kitchens, drinking unlimited beer, smoking inextinguishable pipes, and revelling in a ceaseless flow of gossip. We smile at the good man's intense delight in a love-story, at the simplicity which makes him see a good Samaritan in Parson Trulliber, at the absence of mind which makes him pitch his *Æschylus* into the fire, or walk a dozen miles in profound oblivion of the animal which should have been between his knees; but his contemporaries were provoked to a horse-laugh, and when we remark the tremendous practical jokes which his innocence suggests to them, we admit that he requires his whole athletic vigour to bring so tender a heart safely through so rough a world.

If the ideal hero is to live in fancy-land and talk in blank verse, Adams has clearly no right to the title, nor, indeed, has Don Quixote. But the masculine portraiture of the coarse realities is not only indicative of intellectual vigour, but artistically appropriate. The contrast between the world and its simple-minded inhabitant is the more forcible in proportion to the firmness and solidity of Fielding's touch. Uncle Toby proves that Sterne had preserved enough tenderness to make an exquisite plaything of his emotions. The Vicar of Wakefield proves that Goldsmith had preserved a childlike innocence of imagination, and could retire from duns and publishers to an idyllic world of his own. Joseph Andrews proves that Fielding was neither a child nor a sentimentalist, but that he had learnt to face facts as they are, and set a true value on the best elements of human life. In the midst of vanity and vexation of spirit he could find some comfort in pure and strong domestic affection. He can indulge his feelings without introducing the false note of sentimentalism, or condescending to tone his pictures with rose colour. He wants no illusions. The exemplary Dr. Harrison in *Amelia* held no action unworthy of him which could protect an innocent person or "bring a rogue to the gallows." Good Parson Adams could lay his cudgel on the back of a villain with hearty good will. He believes too easily in human goodness, but there is not a maudlin fibre in his whole body. He would not be the man to cry over a dead donkey, whilst children are in want of bread. He would be slower than the excellent Dr. Primrose to believe in the reformation of a villain by fine phrases, and if he fell

into such a weakness his biographer would not, like Goldsmith, be inclined to sanction the error. A villain is induced to reform, indeed, by the sight of Amelia's excellence, but Fielding is careful to tell us that the change was illusory, and that the villain ended on a gallows. We are made sensible that if Adams had his fancies they were foibles, and therefore sources of misfortune. We are to admire the childlike character, but not to share its illusions. The world is not made of moonshine. Hypocrisy, cruelty, avarice, and lust have to be stamped out by hard blows, not cured by delicate infusion of graceful sentimentalisms.

So far Fielding's portrait of an ideal character is all the better for his masculine grasp of fact. It must, however, be admitted that he fails a little on the other side of the contrast. He believes in a good heart, but scarcely in very lofty motive. He tells us in *Tom Jones* * that he has painted no perfect character, because he never happened to meet one. His stories, like *Vanity Fair*, may be described as novels without a hero. It is not merely that his characters are imperfect, but that they are deficient in the finer ingredients which go to make up the nearest approximations of our imperfect natures to heroism. Colonel Newcome was not perhaps so good a man as Parson Adams, but he had a certain delicacy of sentiment which led him, as we may remember, to be rather hard upon Tom Jones, and which Fielding (as may be gathered from Bath in *Amelia*) would have been inclined to ridicule. Parson Adams is simple enough to become a laughing-stock to the brutal, but he never consciously rebels against the dictates of the plainest common sense. His theology comes from Tillotson and Hoadly; he has no eye for the romantic side of his creed, and would be apt to condemn a mystic as simply a fool. His loftiest aspiration is not to reform the world or any part of it, but to get a modest bit of preferment (he actually receives it, we are happy to think, in *Amelia*), enough to pay for his tobacco and his children's schooling. Fielding's dislike to the romantic makes him rather blind to the elevated. He will not only start from the actual, but does not conceive the possibility of an infusion of loftier principles. The existing standard of sound sense prescribes an impassable limit to his imagination. Parson Adams is an admirable incarnation of certain excellent and honest impulses. He sets forth the wisdom of the heart and the beauty of the simple instincts of an affectionate nature. But we are forced to admit that he is not the highest type conceivable, and might, for example, learn something from his less robust colleague, Dr. Primrose.

This remark suggests the common criticism, expounded with his usual facile brilliancy by M. Taine. Fielding, he tells us, loves nature, but he does not love it "like the great impartial artists, Shakspeare and Goethe." He moralises incessantly,—which is wrong. Moreover, his

* Book x. chap. i.

morality appears to be very questionable. It consists in preferring instinct to reason. The hero is the man who is born generous as a dog is born affectionate. And this, says M. Taine, might be all very well were it not for a great omission. Fielding has painted nature, but nature without refinement, poetry, and chivalry. He can only describe the impetuosity of the senses, not the nervous exaltation and the poetic rapture. Man is with him "a good buffalo; and perhaps he is the hero required by a people which is itself called John Bull." In all which, there is an undoubted vein of truth. Fielding's want of refinement, for example, is one of those undeniable facts which must be taken for granted. But, without seeking to set right some other statements implied in M. Taine's judgment, it is worth while to consider a little more fully the moral aspect of Fielding's work. Much has been said upon this point by some who, with M. Taine, take Fielding for a mere "buffalo," and by others who, like Coleridge—a far safer and more sympathetic critic—hold *Tom Jones* to be, on the whole, a sound exposition of healthy morality.

Fielding, on the "buffalo" view, is supposed to be simply taking one side in one of those perpetual controversies which has occupied many generations and never approaches a settlement. He prefers nature to law, instinct to reasoned action; he is on the side of Charles as against Joseph Surface; he admires the publican, and condemns the Pharisee without reserve; he loves the man who is nobody's enemy but his own, and despises the prudent person whose charity ends at his own doorstep. Such a doctrine—so absolutely stated—is rather a negation of all morality than a lax morality. If it implies a love of generous instincts, it denies that a man should have any regard for moral rules, which are needed precisely in order to control our spontaneous instincts. Virtue is amiable, but ceases to be meritorious. Nothing would be easier than to quote passages in which Fielding expressly repudiates such a theory; but, of course, a writer's morality must be judged by the conceptions embodied in his work, not by the maxims scattered through it. Nor, for the same reason, can we pay much attention to Fielding's express assertion that he is writing in the interests of virtue; for Smollett, and less scrupulous writers than even Smollett, have found their account in similar protestations. Yet anybody, I think, who will compare *Joseph Andrews* with that intentionally most moral work, *Pamela*, will admit that Fielding's morality goes deeper than this. Fielding at least makes us love virtue, and is incapable of the solecism which Richardson commits in substantially preaching that virtue means standing out for a higher price. That Fielding's reckless heroes have a genuine sensibility to the claims of virtue, appears still more unmistakably when we compare them with the heartless fine gentlemen of the Congreve school and of his own early plays, or put the faulty Captain Booth beside such an unredeemed scamp as Peregrine Pickle.

It is clear, in short, that the aim of Fielding (whether he succeeds

or not) is the very reverse of that attributed to him by M. Taine. *Tom Jones* and *Amelia* have, ostensibly at least, a most emphatic moral attached to them; and not only attached to them, but borne in mind and elaborately preached throughout. That moral is the one which Fielding had learnt in the school of his own experience. It is the moral that dissipation bears fruit in misery. The remorse, it is true, which was generated in Fielding and in his heroes was not the remorse which drives a man to a cloister or which even seriously poisons his happiness. The offences against morality are condoned too easily, and the line between vice and virtue drawn in accordance with certain distinctions which even Parson Adams could scarcely have approved. Vice, he seems to say, is objectionable only when complicated by cruelty or hypocrisy. But, if Fielding's moral sense is not very delicate, it is vigorous. He hates most heartily what he sees to be wrong, though his sight might easily be improved in delicacy of discrimination. The truth is simply that Fielding accepted that moral code which the better men of the world in his time really acknowledged, as distinguished from that by which they affected to be bound. That so wide a distinction should generally exist between these codes is a matter for deep regret. That Fielding in his hatred for humbug should have condemned purity as puritanical is clearly lamentable. The confusion, however, was part of the man, and, as already noticed, shows itself in one shape or other throughout his work. But it would be unjust to condemn him upon that ground as antagonistic or indifferent to reasonable morality. His morality is at the superior antipodes from the cynicism of a Wycherley; and far superior to the prurient sentimentalism of Sterne or the hotpressed priggishness of Richardson, or even the reckless Bohemianism of Smollett.

There is a deeper question, however, beneath this discussion. The morality of those "great impartial artists" of whom M. Taine speaks differs from Fielding's in a more serious sense. The highest morality of a great work of art depends upon the power with which the essential beauty and ugliness of virtue and vice are exhibited by an impartial observer. The morality, for example, of Goethe and Shakspeare appears in the presentation of such characters as Iago and Mephistopheles. The insight of true genius shows us by such examples what is the true physiology of vice; what is the nature of the man who has lost all faith in virtue and all sympathy with purity and nobility of character. The artist of inferior rank tries to make us hate vice by showing that it comes to a bad end precisely because he has an inadequate perception of its true nature. He can see that a drunkard generally gets into debt or incurs an attack of *delirium tremens*, but he does not exhibit the moral disintegration which is the underlying cause of the misfortune, and which may be equally fatal, even if it happens to evade the penalty. The distinction depends upon the power of the artist to fulfil Fielding's requirement of penetrating to the essence of the objects of his contem-

plation. It corresponds to the distinction in philosophy between a merely prudential system of ethics—the system of the gallows and the gaol—and the system which recognises the deeper issues perceptible to a fine moral sense.

Now, in certain matters, Fielding's morality is of the prudential kind. It resembles Hogarth's simple doctrine that the good apprentice will be Lord Mayor and the bad apprentice get into Newgate. So shrewd an observer was indeed well aware, and could say very forcibly,* that virtue in this world might sometimes lead to poverty, contempt, and imprisonment. He does not, like some novelists, assume the character of a temporal Providence, and knock his evildoers on the head at the end of the story. He shows very forcibly that the difficulties which beset poor Jones and Booth are not to be fairly called accidents, but are the difficulties to which bad conduct generally leads a man, and which are all the harder when not counterbalanced by a clear conscience. He can even describe with sympathy such a character as poor Atkinson in *Amelia*, whose unselfish love brings him more blows than favours of fortune. But it is true that he is a good deal more sensible to what are called the prudential sanctions of virtue, at least of a certain category of virtues, than to its essential beauty. So far the want of refinement of which M. Taine speaks does, in fact, lower, and lower very materially, his moral perception. A man of true delicacy could never have dragged Tom Jones into his lowest degradation without showing more forcibly his abhorrence of his loose conduct. This is, as Colonel Newcome properly points out, the great and obvious blot upon the story, which no critics have missed, and we cannot even follow the leniency of Coleridge, who thinks that a single passage introduced to express Fielding's real judgment would have remedied the mischief. It is too obvious to be denied without sophistry that Tom, though he has many good feelings, and can preach very edifying sermons to his less scrupulous friend Nightingale, requires to be cast in a different mould. His whole character should have been strung to a higher pitch to make us feel that such degradation would not merely have required punishment to restore his self-complacency, but have left a craving for some thorough moral ablution.

Granting unreservedly all that may be urged upon this point, we may still agree with the judgment pronounced by the most congenial critics. Fielding's pages reek too strongly of tobacco; they are apt to turn delicate stomachs; but the atmosphere is, on the whole, healthy and bracing. No man can read them without prejudice and fail to recognise the fact that he has been in contact with something much higher than a "good buffalo." He has learnt to know a man, not merely full of animal vigour, not merely stored with various experience of men and manners, but also in the main sound and unpoisoned by the mephitic vapours which poisoned the atmosphere of his police office. If the scorn

* *Tom Jones*, book xv. chap. i.

of hypocrisy is too fully emphasized, and the sensitiveness to ugly and revolting objects too much deadened by a rough life, yet nobody could be more heartily convinced of the beauty and value of those solid domestic instincts on which human happiness must chiefly depend. Put Fielding beside the modern would-be satirists who make society—especially French society*—a mere sink of nastiness, or beside the more virtuous persons whose favourite affectation is simplicity, and who labour most spasmodically to be masculine, and his native vigour, his massive common sense, his wholesome views of men and manners, stand out in solid relief. Certainly he was limited in perception, and not so elevated in tone as might be desired; but he is a fitting representative of the stalwart vigour and the intellectual shrewdness evident in the best men of his time. The English domestic life of the period was certainly far from blameless, and anything but refined; but, if we have gained in some ways, we are hardly entitled to look with unqualified disdain upon the rough vigour of our beer-drinking, beef-eating ancestors.

We have felt, indeed, the limitations of Fielding's art more clearly since English fiction found a new starting-point in Scott. Scott made us sensible of many sources of interest to which Fielding was naturally blind. He showed us especially that a human being belonged to a society going through a long course of historical development, and renewed the bonds with the past which had been rudely snapped in Fielding's period. Fielding only deals, it may be roughly said, with men as members of a little family circle, whereas Scott shows them as members of a nation rich in old historical traditions, related to the past and the future, and to the external nature in which it has been developed. A wider set of forces is introduced into our conception of humanity, and the romantic element, which Fielding ignored, comes again to life. Scott, too, was a greater man than Fielding, of wider sympathy, loftier character, and, not the least, with an incomparably keener ear for the voices of the mountains, the sea, and the sky. The more Scott is studied, the higher, I believe, the opinion that we shall form of some of his powers. But in one respect Fielding is his superior. It is a kind of misnomer which classifies Scott's books as novels. They are embodied legends and traditions, descriptions of men, and races, and epochs of history; but they are novels, as it were, by accident, and modern readers are often disappointed because the name suggests misleading associations. They expect to sympathise with Scott's heroes, whereas the heroes are generally dropped in from without, just to give ostensible continuity to the narrative. The apparent accessories are really the main substance. The Jacobites and not Waverley, the Borderers, not Mr. Van Beest Brown, the Covenanters, not Morton or Lord Evandale, are the real subject of Scott's best romances. The *Bride of Lammermoor* is almost the sole ex-

* For Fielding's view of the French novels of his day see *Tom Jones*, book xiii. chap. 9.

ception to the general rule. Now Fielding is really a novelist in the more natural sense. We are interested, that is, by the main characters, though they are not always the most attractive in themselves. We are really absorbed by the play of their passions and the conflict of their motives, and not merely taking advantage of the company to see the surrounding scenery or phases of social life. In this sense Fielding's art is admirable, and surpassed that of all his English predecessors as of most of his successors. If the light is concentrated in a narrow focus, it is still healthy daylight. So long as we do not wish to leave his circle of ideas, we see little fault in the vigour with which he fulfils his intention. And therefore, whatever Fielding's other faults, he is beyond comparison the most faithful and profound mouthpiece of the passions and failings of a society which seems at once strangely remote and yet strangely near to us. When seeking to solve that curious problem which is discussed in one of Hazlitt's best essays—what characters one would most like to have met! and running over the various claims of a meeting at the Mermaid with Shakspeare and Jonson, a "neat repast of Attic taste" with Milton, a gossip at Button's with Addison and Steele, a club-dinner with Johnson and Burke, a supper with Lamb, or (certainly the least attractive) an evening at Holland House, I sometimes fancy that, after all, few things would be pleasanter than a pipe and a bowl of punch with Fielding and Hogarth. It is true that for such a purpose I provide myself in imagination with a new set of sturdy nerves and with a digestion such as that which was once equal to the horrors of an undergraduates' "wine party." But, having made that trifling assumption, I fancy that there would be few places where one would hear more good motherwit, shrewder judgments of men and things, or a sounder appreciation of those homely elements of which human life is in fact chiefly composed. Common sense in the highest degree—whether we choose to identify it or contrast it with genius, is at least one of the most enduring and valuable of qualities in literature as everywhere else; and Fielding is one of its best representatives. But perhaps one is unduly biassed by the charm of a complete escape in imagination from the thousand and one affectations which have grown up since Fielding died and we have all become so much wiser and more learned than all previous generations.

Folk-lore of the County Donegal.

THE FAIRIES.

THE belief in the "wee folk," or "gentry," is very much more widely spread in our picturesque and mountainous county than cursory inquirers have any idea of. Every old hawthorn tree, standing alone in the midst of a field, is supposed to be under their protection; and the old Danish forts, so common in the country, as well as the waste grounds or wildernesses, where dog-roses, brambles, woodbine, and hazels grow in a tangle together, are accounted their especial territories.

The elfin people of the Donegal legends do not in the least resemble the fairies of poetry and romance; neither Oberon, Titania, nor Ariel is to be discovered among them. Nor are they like the humorous and frolicsome sprites believed in by the Southern Irishman. The North of Ireland fairy is a practical, calculating being, very like the shrewd, semi-Scotch farmer and cottier, in whose land his wild territory stands.

"Who are the fairies?" we asked an old man who had told several quaint fairy tales, full of strange adventure, gravely vouching for their truth. The curious events described had all, he declared, happened to neighbours and friends of his own, or had been handed down from father to son in his family.

"The gentry is allowed to be the fallen angels," he replied. "When Satan and his angels were thrown over the battlements of heaven, the greater part of them fell down to hell; but some fell into the sea—those is the mermen an' mermaids; an' others fell on the earth—those is the fairies."

"Why are they now so rarely seen or heard?" we inquired.

"Weel, ma'am, there's them that says the wee folk is all awa' to Scotland; but others thinks there's as many o' them in Ireland as ever, only they canna get making themselves visible, becane there's so much Scripture spread abroad over the country."

"Is that your own opinion?"

"It is not, ma'am. I think they know that the judgment-day is drawing near; an' so they're keeping very quiet, in the hope that, if they do no more mischief, they may be saved."

We thanked our old friend for his explanation, which was quite new to us. Our manifest interest in his conversation led him to tell grotesque stories of circumstances which had, he said, taken place at the beginning of the present century, when the elfin people had still the power of making themselves visible.

It was in the autumn of the year 1808 that Andy Donnel "flitted

from the old farm of Tubber-nagatte to that of Dirnahalle, near Letterkenny, accompanied by his mother, wife, and sister, who were mounted upon carts laden with their household plenishing. "Dear, but it's the decent flitting!" ejaculated the neighbours, watching these well-laden carts set forth. "Dear, send ye may have good luck in the new place!" The wish was a kindly one; but time passed over the heads of the tenants of Dirnahalle, and it did not seem likely to be fulfilled. It was not that any fault could be found with house or land; the former, though small, was in excellent repair, and the latter appeared worthy of the manure that Donnel lavished upon it. But his careful culture was fruitless. Very poor turnips and potatoes, miserable wheat, and oats much mixed with smut, alone rewarded his incessant toil. Year after year he and his wife and sister toiled to pay their rent; and the labour became harder each year, while they grew greyer and more wrinkled; and the old lady in the chimney-corner uttered many a lamentation over the departed ease and comfort of Tubber-nagatte. "We maun flit again, Peggy, but we'll hae nae roof over us this time; we'll be poor travellers looking for our bit," said Donnel, one gloomy September day.

He had thatched his miserable stacks, and from his seat in the garden could see the snug stackyards of some of his neighbours. Peggy had no comfort to offer; she sighed deeply, and walked into the house, leaving Donnel seated on a stone against the cottage wall, with his head sunk upon his hands.

He had sat in this dejected attitude for some time, when he became conscious of a sound near him, and, looking up, saw a little old man, wearing a three-cornered cocked-hat, coming towards him between the potato ridges.

"You're studying, neighbour," began the tiny man. "May I ax what it is ails you?" Surprise kept Donnel silent. "You needna be telling me," continued his visitor, "for I ken your trouble weel. Naething prospers that you put your hand till; an' you canna make up the rent, good nor bad."

"You're right," cried Donnel, startled; "that was my study, sure enough."

"Didn't I tell you I knowed it?" rejoined the little man, pettishly. "But I'm sorry for you, an' I'll just tell you what you'll do. Go into the house an' bid your women folk never pour anither drop o' water into the sink, for it's just over my head, an' every drop they pour into that sink goes to put out my kitchen fire. If you take my advice you'll get the sink changed frae the front o' the house, where it is now, to the back, an' maybe things 'll go better wi' you."

So saying, he nodded to the farmer, and, turning heels over head down the potato ridges, disappeared from sight.

Scratching his head with one hand, while he rubbed his eyes with the other, Donnel gazed after the active little man. He then got up, and went into the cottage, and threw himself on his knees over the sink.

"Gie me a cloth, an' never do you throw the potato-water in here again," cried he to his women folk, who looked on in utter astonishment, thinking he must have gone mad. But a few hurried words explained all. His next care was to send for a mason, and have the sink changed from the front to the back of the house, carefully closing up the crevice that lay right above his fairy neighbour's kitchen fire. The mason had the conscience to charge him two shillings for the job; but he was wont to say that it was, after all, a cheap morning's work. For from that hour everything prospered with him. The farm bore splendid crops, the cows yielded fabulous quantities of golden butter, the rent was paid with ease, and money was lodged in the bank against a rainy day, which, however, never came.

We have said that the old hawthorn trees are still looked upon as fairy property. Woe betide the foolhardy person who ventures to raise an axe against one of these "gentle bushes," as they are called. Indeed the man who, either to earn money, or to win his master's favour, cuts down a "gentle bush," is sure, the people think, to suffer for it. The large farmers, all tolerably well educated in these days, are naturally unwilling to lose good ground; and the gnarled hawthorns are disappearing from the fields where the superstition of former generations left them. But the farmer must often take the hatchet into his own hand, so reluctant are his labourers to help him.

Two curious instances of this superstition came lately under the writer's own observation. A poor man in the village of Carrigans, tempted by the offer of five shillings, cut down one of these trees; the season was very wot, and he soon afterwards had a severe attack of rheumatic fever, which some of his neighbours declared to be a judgment of the "gentry" upon him! The branches of the dishonoured tree lay long unregarded; but at length the mother of a large family, remembering that coals were very dear, plucked up courage to carry the branches home and burn them. Her husband, however, hurt his hand in a flax-mill next day, and one of her children fell out of bed and broke its arm—a punishment, she said, for her rash deed! But the fairies are not always malevolent and revengeful. Some of the quaintest Donegal legends represent them as being generously and kindly disposed towards their human neighbours.

Very long ago—years before the railroads were made, when tall trees were little saplings—there lived an old woman and her daughter in a tiny mud hovel by the wayside. An ancient hawthorn tree grew very close to the cabin, stretching its gnarled arms over the thatch, and striking its roots deep and far. The factories were not yet built, and spinning-wheels hummed in every chimney corner, and the girls sang sweet songs to their drowsy accompaniments.

Kitty spun all day long, but she could not sing. The birds, however, haunted the "gentle bush," whose branches lay upon the roof like a mass of snow in spring, and a crimson curtain in autumn, and there was the

blithest music in the cottage. Kitty was always alone, for her daughter worked in the fields. One evening, as she sat at her work, a little old woman in a red cloak appeared at the door.

"Come in, good woman, an' tak' an air o' the fire," said Kitty, stopping her wheel.

The visitor sat down on a stool in the chimney corner, and began to talk as any one of Kitty's acquaintances from the village might have done; but she could not recollect ever having seen her before.

"Will you be pleased to lend me the loan o' a little bowl of meal till to-morrow?" asked the stranger, rising to take leave.

"Ay, good woman, an' welcome," replied Kitty, going to the barrel in the corner of the kitchen, and filling a bowl with meal.

"I'll bring it back in the morning," said the little woman, taking leave, with smiles and thanks.

There was very little meal left—hardly enough to make Nell's breakfast next morning; and Kitty thought to herself, "I hope the wee woman 'ill come early wi' the meal."

Nell returned from her work soon afterwards, but her mother quite forgot to mention the visit she had received in her absence. But when the time came for making breakfast, the occurrence flashed upon her memory, and she went over to the barrel. What was her astonishment to find it half full of new oatmeal! "I ken her well enough, now," thought the old woman; "she's one of the gentry, an' I'll no speak of her fornenst Nell. She was a dainty, wee woman, an' she kept her word. We maun mak' the stirabout, an' I hope the meal's canny." Nell thought the meal so good that she asked where it had come from, saying she did not think Pat Ryan, of the shop, had laid in any new meal. Her mother made no reply.

It was about the same hour in the evening, that Kitty, still spinning, heard a voice which sounded as if from the top of the chimney, saying, "Bo-peep, Kitty; are you there?"

"Ay," said Kitty. "Is that you? I'm here. Come down, an' come in, an' sit down on the wee creepie fornenst me, an' we'll hae a crack."

The little woman obeyed, and remained until it was almost time for Nell's return home; and from that day forward she always appeared at the same hour. Plenty began to reign in the cabin. The meal barrel was frequently replenished; the tea canister was never empty; and saucers of cream and prints of butter were to be found upon the dresser when tea-time drew near.

Kitty, at this fortunate period of her life, was a fat and flourishing old woman. Pence and even sixpences were discovered in the most unexpected places—on the threshold, on the hearthstone, or in the tea-cups! This state of things lasted for two years; but Nell's curiosity had been greatly excited by the unwonted abundance, and the discovery of sixpence in her nightcap brought her wonder to its climax. She implored her mother to tell where the money came from, and at length

her importunity prevailed. From the day when the foolish woman betrayed her secret, no more supplies of meal, tea, butter, and cream were to be found in the cabin; and what was already there had vanished clean away,

"Like fairy gifts fading away;"

neither did the offended elfin benefactress ever after appear. The wee folk are very grateful for any kindness shown them.

The parish of Ray is a gentle place, and curious things have from time immemorial been happening to people dwelling therein. As turf bogs abound, the fires are replenished in the houses each night, that the fairies may come in to warm themselves, if it so please them. About twenty years ago, a man, named M'Ginty, was awakened by hearing a great commotion in his kitchen; he peeped down from the loft where his bed was, and saw a crowd of little creatures round the fire. There had probably been a fight among them, for one of their number lay upon the hearthstone covered with blood. M'Ginty listened to what they were saying, and found that they were in a difficulty because they had no linen to bind up the unfortunate creature's wounds; so, throwing his shirt down into the kitchen, he called out, "Tak' that, an' welcome, if it 'ill be any use to yous." The little folk thanked him; and he, knowing that they cannot endure to be watched, lay down again. There was no trace next morning of what had happened, but M'Ginty found a shilling on the table; and from that time forth he was never without money. Sometimes it was in his boot; sometimes in his teacup, or lying on the threshold. He laid by a good deal of money—enough to support his family in comfort when a hard winter came and he was thrown out of work. But his wife wondered unceasingly where the funds came from, and tormented him to tell her. As she asked the same question day after day, he replied that, if he were to tell who gave him that money, he would most certainly get no more. Notwithstanding this, she persisted in wearying him with her entreaties, and at last he was so provoked that he revealed the secret. On visiting his hoard soon afterwards, he found a heap of dead leaves where the money had been.

Stephen Murphy's wife was a much more sensible woman. Her husband was one who endeavoured to live on good terms with the gentry; he never went to bed without putting on a good fire, sweeping up the hearth, and leaving bread, milk, and butter on the table. The food was always gone in the morning, but liberal payment was lying in its place. Mrs. Murphy knew better than to make a remark or ask a question; indeed, on one occasion hearing an unusual stir in the kitchen, and thinking that some evil-disposed person might have broken into the house, she got up, opened the bed-room door very softly, and peeped in. A number of tiny beings, some dressed in red, others in green, were clustered round the fire. She retreated noiselessly, and never until she was on her death-bed mentioned what she had seen to either husband or neighbour.

A middle-aged man living in Carrigans, the village before referred to,

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declares that he has been under the protection of the fairies since his boyhood, but does not know how he was so fortunate as to gain their good-will. As he was employed in making the railroad between Londonderry and Strabane, he went one morning rather early to his work, and, arriving before the other men, sat down in the shed where the spades and crowbars were kept, and lit his pipe. He heard a cough, and, looking up, perceived a red-haired woman standing in the doorway, who said to him, "The bank will fall in to-day and kill two men close beside you ; it 'ill take you to be on your guard and watch well." So saying, she disappeared. The bank did fall in, and the two men who worked beside James M'Alister were crushed to death ; he escaped by springing backwards at the first sign of danger. On two other occasions his companions met with fatal accidents—once while blasting a rock ; another time while cutting a road—and he escaped unhurt. These latter escapes, as well as the first, he attributes to fairy guardianship.

The Banshee, or white fairy, seems to be very closely related to the "gentry ;" but she is always connected, in the minds of our peasantry, with mourning and death.

A poor man was seated at his fireside one summer evening, when he heard something resembling a mournful cry, or, still more, the sorrowful exclamation of a very old person. At the same moment a little woman, bent almost double and leaning on a stick, crossed his threshold. She looked at him fixedly, and, turning about again, went away sighing and groaning heavily. "Ally," called the man to his wife, "did you see that ? Did you hear that sore crying ? There'll be a death among us, for that was something that follows our family." The wife had caught sight of the ill-omened stranger, and she ran out into the street of Rathmullan, and looked up and down, but there was no trace of her to be seen. Next day Tom Sweeney and some of his neighbours went to bathe. All were in good spirits as they walked down to the shore together ; but a sudden melancholy struck Tom, and he remarked, "I wonder which of us will live to go home again ?" He was seized with cramp while bathing, and sank. Poor Ally knew then that the Banshee's lamentations had been for him.

There is a good deal of sameness in the stories of Banshee warnings ; the one above related is very like a number of others which have been told to the writer.

By far the greater number of our fairy legends relate to changelings. The wee folk are said to covet a beautiful infant ; and, if it be not constantly and carefully watched, will steal it away, leaving a fairy in its place. The elf looks exactly like the stolen child ; but no sooner is it left in the cradle than it begins to wail, and, as it grows more and more cross and evil tempered, so also does it become paler and more miserable in appearance. The people had several means by which they decided whether the crying baby was a changeling or not. The following cruel test was actually tried, in the neighbourhood of Raphoe, some sixteen years ago.

A mother was nursing a crying "backgone" child of eighteen months old, when an old beggarwoman entered the house, and was hospitably invited to rest and warm herself. As the child bit, scratched, and made itself otherwise disagreeable, the crone observed it attentively.

"That's a bad wean you have there," she remarked. The child stopped its angry wail to scowl at her. "Ah, wad you girn at me? God be between you an' me!" said she, shaking her withered hands at the baby.

"For God's sake, good woman, tell me what you mean!" cried the frightened mother.

"Was thon wean aye the way he is now, ma'am?"

"Na, na; he was the bonniest an' best o' childer, till he was more nor a quarter old, an' he turned like this all of a sudden. I ha' nae peace wi' him night nor day."

"Weel, I'm afear'd he's no what he ought to be, an', if you tak' my bidding, you'll get foxy leaves (digitalis, or foxglove), an' boil them, an' bathe him three times in the water, an' then weigh him in the scales. If he's your ain child he'll live, but if he's what I think he is he'll die."

The child was duly bathed in foxglove water, and died a few hours after.

A tailor, working in a farmer's kitchen, was tormented by one of these wailing infants. He wondered at its unceasing cries and at its mother's patience. These cries went on always while she was in the room, but stopped if she were called away. On one occasion, when the servant summoned her mistress into the yard, the child said to the tailor, "Will I play you a tune?" The man nodded; and the little creature took a fiddle from behind his pillow, and, sitting up in his cradle, played reels and jigs in a masterly manner. "But we maun stop now, for here comes the old witch. Don't tell;" and the child hid the fiddle, and began to cry again as the mistress opened the door. The tailor told her what had taken place in her absence, and recommended her to put the child on a sieve and shake him above the fire. She very reluctantly consented; the elf was shaken in the smoke, and, grinning and muttering, flew up the wide chimney, and was gone.

Quite as well known in Donegal is the legend of Crohan Hill. Jack Martin and his wife Katey rented a good farm in the townland of Crohan. All the land was of excellent quality except half an acre of rocky ground, which was "allowed" to be a very "gentle place." No farmer had ever been so rash as to blast a rock or cut a bramble there, and Jack Martin always gave Crohan Hill a wide berth when he guided his plough—he was not the man to live on bad terms with the fairies. Everything prospered on the farm. His cows, horses, sheep, and poultry were the finest in the country, but he had no child to inherit his savings. At length a happy day came when he and Katey had a son—a dear, lovely infant with blue eyes, lint white locks, and rosy cheeks.

"Dear, but he's bonnie!" said the women who had assembled in the farm kitchen. "You maun keep your eye upon him, Mrs. Martin, an',

if you hae to leave him his lane in the house, be sure you put the tongs across the cradle."

Mrs. Martin followed this advice carefully for some time; but it happened one day that she was called out to look at a sick cow, and forgot to put the tongs across the cradle. She was greeted on her return by a fretful, feeble wail, and from that day her healthy, good-humoured child seemed to dwindle and pine away. He cried continually; he scratched, he bit, he refused to sleep; none but a mother could have nursed and loved him still. "He's the cross wean, sure enough; but he'll be all right when he gets his teeth," said the poor woman to herself.

Three years passed without bringing any change for the better; but the "backgone" child, though small, and fractious, and sickly, was as wise as an old man.

"Katey," said the farmer, coming into the kitchen one morning, "I maun gae down to the forge wi' these plough irons."

"Weel, dear," said Katey.

"Father," said the child, who had ceased his wail to listen, "you needna be going to the smith, for I'll tell you what he'll do. He'll put the plough irons in the fire, and he'll tak' them out, an' throw them on the floor, an' say, 'There, I've missed my heat! Tak' them an' use them—they'll do you a wee while, anyway.'"

"Will he, my man?" said the farmer, laughing.

The smith did exactly as the child said he would. He put the irons into the fire, but took them out in a few minutes and threw them on the floor, crying, "There! I've missed my heat! Tak' them an' use them—they'll do you a wee while, anyway."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Martin, "that's what my little boy said you'd do."

"What little boy is that?"

"Just my wee boy that I hae at hame."

"That's a boy!" said the smith. "Now, shall I tell you what to do with that little boy of yours? Have you ever a big pot in the house?"

"Ay, sure," returned the farmer, open-mouthed—there's the pot the pig's meat is made in."

"Weel, throw these irons into the pot, wi' as big a clash an' jingle as you can make, an' clap your hands, an' cry, 'Crohan Hill's on fire!' an' you'll see what that little boy o' yours will do."

Poor Martin walked home with the plough irons. He was annoyed at the smith's insinuations; but thought he would do as he recommended, if only to prove him wrong about the child. He entered the kitchen, flung the irons into the great pot, and cried out, "Crohan Hill's on fire!"

The child no sooner heard this cry than he started up, exclaiming, "Oh! my wife an' weans will be roasted," ran across the kitchen, and flew up the wide chimney. Somewhere in fairy dwellings the Martins'

own child remained ; but, when the shock caused by his disappearance had a little subsided, they congratulated themselves at having got rid of his elfish substitute.

Less quaint but more poetical than the above is the legend of Rhoda Devlin. Two farmhouses at the foot of Carrick Brae were inhabited by John Devlin and Mark Callaghan. Exactly between their two farms arose the rocky hill, which was overgrown in parts with stunted hazel bushes, wild roses, and woodbine, leaving patches of scanty grass here and there where sheep or pigs might graze. Each farmer kept three gaunt pigs, as different from the sleek animals of the present day as can be imagined ; and, as it was then the custom to keep them out of doors in summer, they used to send the pigs to the Brae. An amicable arrangement was made that Rhoda Devlin and Nancy Callaghan should feed these six interesting creatures day about. When it happened to be little Rhoda's day for carrying the bucket of potato-skins and buttermilk to the pigs' trough upon the Brae, she was wont to set out in high spirits, the sunshine making her yellow ringlets shine like gold, and every one who met her used to say, "What a beautiful child !" Nobody said this of Nancy, who was merely a stout, round-faced girl, like a hundred other peasant children. The beautiful Rhoda loved to play, and gather bouquets of roses, bluebells, and fairy thimbles on the Brae ; and she had many pretty fancies about the nooks and tangles, and the little arbours underneath the bracken. She liked to linger there much better than to help her mother to wash the dishes, feed the poultry, or bake the cakes for supper.

It was on a warm summer afternoon that she took her bucket, and set out for the Brae. The afternoon faded into evening, and her mother went many times as far as the green gate to look for her before she appeared.

"Naughty child, what kept you frae your work ?" asked Mrs. Devlin.

"Oh, mammy, dinna be angry ! It was the nice, wee childer on the Brae made me stop to play wi' them, an' the time went by."

"What childer is those, Rhoda ?"

"I dinna know, mammy."

"Maybe they belong to those M'Phersons that's come to Mr. Graham's new house down there at Carrick ?"

"I dinna know," repeated the child.

"Weel, Rhoda," said her mother, pushing her roughly into the kitchen, "be they wha they may, you'll no leave your work again—idle, bad child !"

Next day it was Nancy's turn to feed the pigs, and she did not meet with any company to idle her ; but on the day after that Rhoda went again. It was sunset before she returned. She was received with reproaches, to which she replied—

"It was the nice, wee childer kept me, an' wouldna let me go ; an'

oh! mammy, dinna send me to the Brae again, for they say they'll keep me the next time, an' no let me awa any more."

She sobbed bitterly, and seemed to be in the liveliest terror.

"Nonsense! Stop talking that foolishness!" said her father and mother, angrily.

A kind of horror appeared to possess the child: she could not be induced to settle to anything, and her restlessness increased as the hour for her next visit drew near.

"Here, be off wi' you, Rhoda," said John Devlin, putting the bucket into her hand.

"Oh, daddy, please, dinna send me! Let Mick go the day," cried the child, clasping her hands.

"Mick has his work to do. Was there ever sich a contrairy child! Go this very minute, an' tell the childer your father bids you come home at wanst."

Very slowly Rhoda lifted her pail, and turned to go, sobbing bitterly as she went. She never came home. Evening—sunset—twilight came, and brought no sign of her. Search was made upon the Brae; but no trace of her could be discovered beyond the empty bucket, and a bunch of faded foxgloves laid upon a stone. The neighbours had not seen her, and very grave indeed they looked when they heard the story.

"You shouldna ha' sent her back, when she fleeced you sae sore. Sure she was a bonnie wean, an' it's like enough the wee folk set their hearts on her. She'll be weel done for wi' them, for it's said they ha' fine houses underground, furnished like a gentleman's parlour, an' the very best o' gude living;—but it is to be feared that you'll see her nae mair."

This was cold comfort for the heart broken parents. Mrs. Devlin kept vigil upon the Brae on May eves and Hallowe'ens, for at such times mortals, it is said, may see the el'fin people; but, alas! she never saw her child. She saw the powder fall from the catkins, and the hazel plumes nod to the May breeze, but never her pretty Rhoda's yellow curls. She heard fairy pipers play in the distance; and in chill October withered benweeds rustled like footsteps on the Brae; but she never heard the elphin troop ride by, nor ever caught the sound of her lost child's voice.

L. M'C.

Great Storms.

GREAT storms may be compared to those waves on a perturbed sea which rise higher than their fellows, because representing in reality the combined mass of several waves. It is not probable that the causes producing storms vary from time to time in energy, except within very narrow limits. The sun is always pouring forth his heat with unvarying abundance, though as the earth draws slightly nearer to him, or passes slightly farther from him, in traversing her slightly eccentric orbit, she receives a greater or smaller proportion of the heat which he emits. And again, though hour by hour the face of the earth turned sunwards is changing, and though as the year proceeds she now bows her northern, now her southern regions more fully towards him, yet it is not from changes such as these that great storms proceed. Such changes proceed too slowly and too uniformly to generate of themselves great atmospheric disturbances. It is in the accidental combination of irregular causes of atmospheric disturbance, not in regular variations in the action of the great source of all the atmospheric motions, that destructive hurricanes have their origin. And in this respect great storms may well be compared to those great waves which from time to time overtop their fellows on a storm-tossed sea. For such waves are not produced by the action of fiercer blasts than have perturbed the sea around them. Every portion of that sea has been equally disturbed, or nearly so. But it is because in some cases wave-movements chance to be so associated with others that wave-crests coalesce with wave-crests, and hollows with hollows, producing greater disturbance, while in other cases the wave-crests of one set agree with the hollows of another, and *vice versa*, reducing the disturbance, that waves over the perturbed sea are unequal; and when it so chances that several waves coalesce into one, we have one of those mighty waves which seamen dread. A ship shall have stood for hours the full brunt of a storm, riding over the lesser waves, and reeling indeed before the larger, but rising again after they have passed, when an unlucky chance will bring a wave upon her in which the waters of many waves are gathered; and at one blow she will be disabled. So with the great storms which are remembered for many years. There has been a stormy season. The winds have now raged for awhile, and have anon lulled; but for weeks there has been no very terrible storm in any part of the wind-swept region; at length, however, it so chances that several storms combining into one, within some limited area, a hurricane occurs which carries desolation in its track. Such was the storm which

lately destroyed nearly a quarter of a million of lives in India, such the great storm of 1780. And there have been others as terrible, and only less destructive because their chief fury was spent in thinly-peopled regions.

We propose to consider some of the more remarkable storms recorded in the annals of meteorology, and then to inquire how far the evidence seems to suggest either the possibility of anticipating the approach of such great storms, or else of providing measures by which, when they occur in certain regions, their effects may be rendered less disastrous than they have been heretofore.

The most terrible storm which has, perhaps, ever occurred is that which has been called the Great Storm. It occurred, or rather its worst effects were experienced, on October 10, 1780. Generated probably in mid-Atlantic, not far from the equator, it was first felt in Barbadoes, where trees and houses were blown down. Captain Maury, in his "Physical Geography of the Sea," gives a rather exaggerated account of the effects produced by this storm in Barbadoes, apparently from memory—some of the details being *like*, but not quite the same as those actually recorded. He says "the bark was blown from the trees, and the fruits of the earth destroyed; the very bottom and depths of the sea were uprooted—forts and castles were washed away, and their great guns carried in the air like chaff." The bark of trees was removed, but, it is believed rather through the effects of electric action than by the power of the wind. Cannon, also, were driven along the batteries, and flung over into the fosse, but not "carried in the air like chaff." At Martinique the storm overtook a French transport fleet, and entirely destroyed it. There were forty vessels, conveying 4,000 soldiers, and the Governor of Martinique reported their fate to the French Government in three words—"The vessels disappeared." 9,000 persons perished at Martinique, and 1,000 at St. Pierre, where not a house was left standing. St. Domingo, St. Vincent, St. Eustache, and Porto Rico were next visited and devastated, while scarcely a single vessel near this part of the cyclone's track was afloat on October 11. At Port Royal the cathedral, seven churches, and 1,400 houses were blown down, and 1,600 sick and wounded persons were buried beneath the ruins of the hospital. At the Bermudas, fifty British ships were driven ashore, two line-of-battle ships went down at sea, and 22,000 persons perished.

Perhaps the most remarkable effects of the storm in this portion of its course were those experienced in the Leeward Isles. The hurricane drove a twelve-pounder cannon a distance of 400 feet. Those who lived in the Government Building took refuge in the central part, where circular walls, nearly a yard thick, seemed to afford promise of safety. But at half-past eleven, the wind had broken down parts of these walls, and lifted off the roof. Terrified they sought refuge in the cellarage, but before long the water had risen there to the height of more than a yard, and they were driven into the battery, where they placed themselves behind the heavier cannons, some of which were driven from their place

by the force of the wind. When day broke the country looked as if it had been blasted by fire; not a leaf, scarce even a branch, remained upon the trees.

As in great floods a common terror preserves peace among animals which usually war upon each other, so during the Great Storm human passions were for the time quelled by the fiercer war of the elements. Among the ships destroyed at Martinique were two English war-ships. Twenty-five sailors who survived surrendered themselves prisoners to the Marquis of Bouillé, the Governor of the island. But he sent them to St. Lucie, writing to the English Governor of that island that "he was unwilling to retain as prisoners men who had fallen into his hands during a disaster from which so many had suffered."

The Great Storm of 1780 must not be confounded with the storm remembered for many years in Great Britain as the Great Storm. The latter occurred on November 26, 1703, and its worst effects were experienced not as usual in the tropics, but in Western Europe. The reader will remember Macaulay's reference to it in his Essay on the "Life and Writings of Addison." In his famous poem *The Campaign*, Addison had compared Marlborough to an angel guiding the whirlwind. "We must point out," writes Macaulay, "one circumstance which appears to have escaped all the critics. The extraordinary effect which this simile produced when it first appeared, and which to the following generation appeared inexplicable, is doubtless to be chiefly attributed to a line which most readers now regard as a feeble parenthesis,—

Such as, of late, o'er pale Britannia passed.

Addison spoke, not of a storm, but of the storm. The great tempest of November 1703, the only tempest which in our latitude has equalled the rage of a tropical hurricane, had left a dreadful recollection in the minds of all men. No other tempest was ever in this country the occasion of a parliamentary address or of a public fast. Whole fleets had been cast away. Large mansions had been blown down. One prelate had been buried beneath the ruins of his palace. London and Bristol had presented the appearance of cities just sacked. Hundreds of families were still in mourning. The prostrate trunks of large trees, and the ruins of houses, still attested, in all the southern counties, the fury of the blast." He strangely omits to mention one of the most striking events connected with this terrible storm—the destruction of the Eddystone Lighthouse. Winstanley, the architect of the first Eddystone Lighthouse, was confident that it could resist the fiercest storm which ever blew, and expressed a hope that he might be in it when such a storm raged. On November 26, he arrived with a party of men who were engaged to repair the building. The Great Storm soon after began to blow and raged throughout the night. On the morning of the 27th no trace of the Lighthouse was to be seen.

It is probable that the Great Storm of 1703 owed its destructiveness

to the narrow range over which its track extended. As a storm widens in extent it loses in power, much as a river flows more sluggishly where its stream widens than where it has to make its way along a narrow channel. It is for this reason that certain regions suffer more from storms than others. Thus in the West Indies that great storm-breeder the Gulf Stream is at its narrowest. Here, therefore, the whirling storms, generated by the rush toward the channel of rare and warm air above the Gulf Stream, attain their greatest intensity, and have worked most terrible destruction. The Great Storm of 1780 affords an illustration, but many others might be cited. Flammarion relates that "at Guadaloupe, on July 25, 1825, solidly constructed houses were demolished, and a new building, belonging to the State, had one wing completely blown down. The wind had imparted such a rate of speed to the tiles that many of them penetrated through thick doors. A piece of deal 39 inches long, 10 inches wide, and nearly 1 inch thick, moved through the air so rapidly that it went right through a palm-tree 18 inches in diameter. A piece of wood about 18 inches wide, and 4 or 5 yards long, projected by the wind along a hard road, was driven a yard deep into the ground. A large iron railing in front of the Governor's palace was shattered to pieces. A quantity of the *débris* from Guadaloupe was carried to Montserrat, over an arm of the sea 50 miles wide. Three twenty-four-pounders were blown from one end of a battery to the other. The vessels which were in the harbour of Basseterre disappeared, and one of the captains, who had escaped, said that his ship was lifted by the hurricane out of the sea, and was, so to speak, "shipwrecked in the air." The last-mentioned event is, however, "rather a large order," as our American cousins would say; probably that captain was too confused by the turmoil going on all round him when his ship was destroyed, to note with strict scientific accuracy what took place. Ships have been carried by the force of a gale upon the crest of a high roller, and have acquired such velocity that they have been flung some distance beyond the range reached by the wave itself. Thus in 1681 an Antigua vessel was carried out of the water to a point ten feet above the highest known tide. But nothing, we believe, has ever yet happened to a ship, even during the fiercest hurricane, which could properly be described in the words used by the Basseterre captain. His description probably bore the same relation to the facts as Maury's account of "great guns carried in the air like chaff." Probably when a storm really blows great guns in this way, it may lift ships out of the sea and shipwreck them in the air; but "in such a" *when* "we write a *never*."

The delta of the Ganges is another region where wind-storms acquire unusual intensity because of the way in which their range is narrowed. It seems probable that the whole of this delta forms a region of indraught, and the disposition of the land and mountain ranges helps to intensify the storms generated in the movement of air towards this region, especially in October and November, near the "changes of the

monsoons." "During the interregnum," says Maury, "the fiends of the storm hold their terrific sway." Becalmed often for a day or two, seamen hear moaning sounds in the air forewarning them of the coming storm. Then suddenly the winds break loose from the forces which have for a while controlled them, and seem to rage with a fury that would "break up the fountains of the deep." In 1823 a cyclone about a mile in diameter passed near Calcutta, during which 1,239 fishermen's houses were blown down. It serves to give some idea of the force of the wind to mention that a piece of bamboo was driven through a wall five feet in thickness. In other hurricanes in this region vessels have been carried from the sea far inland, not of course by being flung bodily out of the water, but carried along by the waters which have burst their usual bounds. Although this region has been the scene of many terrible catastrophes, none can be compared for a moment in destructiveness with the storm of October 31st last. "Those who remember," remarks a writer in the *Bombay Gazette*, "the cyclone which took place more than a dozen years ago will be able to recall vividly to their recollection the dreadful aspects which the storm presented. Houses were blown down, panes of glass were smashed by the atmospheric pressure, ships were lifted bodily out of the water" (again!) "and hurled upon the shore, where they were smashed. Many lives were lost and much property destroyed. But that cyclone was but a pleasant breeze compared with the disastrous storm-wave which has devastated the delta of the Ganges."

The region where the cyclone of last October worked most terrible destruction is the eastern part of the great Ganges delta, where the river Megna (formed by the confluence of the Ganges and the Brahmapootra) pours its waters into the Bay of Bengal. The volume of water carried down by this river is greater than is discharged by any other Asiatic river into the sea, a point which must be remembered in considering the circumstances of the late catastrophe. We have here an enormous estuary discharging nearly 150,000 cubic feet of water per second southwards, between the low-lying districts of Dacca on the west and Bulloah on the east. Farther on it reaches the archipelago of which the three chief islands are Dakhan Shabazpore, Hattiah, and Sundee, in order eastwards. Opposite the first-named is the district of Backergunge (the Ganges flowing between); opposite the last-named is the district of Chittagong.

On the evening of October 31 nothing suggested danger. "The weather had been a little windy, hazy, and hot; but there was nothing to excite the suspicions" of the inhabitants of the three islands and the districts surrounding the mouths of the Megna and the Ganges. To use the Lieutenant-Governor's words, "a million or thereabouts of souls retired to rest apprehending nothing." At about eleven o'clock the wind freshened, but not to a noteworthy degree, and "the sleepers slept on." Suddenly, at about midnight, a mighty wave, glittering in the starlight, was seen

rushing in landwards, and in a few moments houses and lands were engulfed, and masses of human beings and *débris* were swept away on the top of the flood." We seem to be reading of one of those mighty waves which have been raised in mid ocean during the throes of some tremendous earthquake : but it was the wind which had driven before it this great mass of water. Driven onwards, it rushed into the estuary of the Megna, spreading over the surrounding shores and over the two eastern islands to a depth of several feet in many places. The worst was yet to come, however. The wave which had come in from the sea had been a long roller, and though it had contracted, increasing in height in so doing, as it rushed into the narrowing estuary, yet it was not until it had passed into the Megna that it acquired its full height. Pressed onwards by the cyclone, it gathered volume, until at length its weight overcame the pressure of the wind, when it swept back in one mighty and deep wave round the western channel, between Dakhan Shabazpore and Backergunge, inundating the island to a depth of twenty feet in many places, and spreading inland over Backergunge to a distance of from six to twelve miles from the shore. It had entered the estuary from the south-east, and now rushed outwards, almost dead against the wind, from the north-east.

A remarkable illustration of the terribly sudden nature of the disaster is afforded by the experience of Mr. Higgins, the Inspecting Postmaster at Noakolly. On the night of October 31st he was in his travelling barge, in a creek near Noakolly, about ten miles from the river Megna. "He had gone to bed at eleven without any fear or anxiety whatever. His boatman had gone on shore, but four native servants were with him on board. Shortly before midnight he was awakened by a cry of 'The waters are up !' Jumping up, he looked out, and saw a high wave, with its crest and top gleaming in the starlight ; it seemed like a flash ; in an instant his boats were rising up on high ; he fastened on a life-belt in a few moments ; another wave came rolling on, and the barge capsized ; he paddled about in the water all the rest of the night with the help of the life-belt ; the native servants clung to spars. Three were saved and one was lost. The water felt warm to the body, but the air was bitterly cold to the head or hands above the surface."

The total destruction of life probably surpassed any which has been produced in the same space of time since the world was peopled. Sir Richard Temple, after a personal inspection of the afflicted districts, has come to the conclusion that not less than 215,000 persons lost their lives. He distributes the fatality as follows :—Backergunge, with the island of Dakhan Shabazpore, possessing a population of 437,000, has lost about a fourth of that number ; Noakolly, with a population of 403,000, has lost 90,000 ; and Chittagong, with a population of 222,000, has lost 20,000. So that, out of a total population of 1,062,000 persons, more than one fifth have perished. To this terrible human mortality must be added a tremendous destruction of animal life, which, as Sir Richard Temple remarks, "though it may not be felt acutely at the present moment, will

form a serious obstacle to agricultural operations by the survivors a few months hence." "Well may the Government of India," remarks the *Bombay Gazette*, "express the opinion that the calamity is scarcely paralleled in the annals of history. It will take many years before the afflicted districts will be able to recover from its effects, and it will be a landmark in the history of even this country of great calamities. The swiftness of the catastrophe must have been terrific, and one may almost gather from Sir Richard Temple's minute that the great waves literally flashed out over the land, and that simultaneously the vast destruction of life was completed. . . . When the sun rose next morning it shone upon a desolate country and a shivering terror-stricken band of survivors, who were not yet able to realise what kind of calamity it was that had overwhelmed them so suddenly and mysteriously in the darkness. Many had been snatched from imminent death in wonderful ways; some had been able instinctively to catch hold of a friendly piece of wood floating past them, and many had been swept into trees, where they were held tightly by the thorns and the branches until the waters had subsided. Villagers were astonished with the appearance of the corpses of strangers in the midst of their villages, and it was not until the extent of the calamity became widely known that it was found there were few homesteads or villages that had not had dead bodies washed into them from a distance."

The cyclone is simply a whirlwind on a large scale. What we have said respecting the destructiveness of cyclones varying inversely with their range must not, of course, be understood as signifying that a large cyclone is necessarily less destructive than a small one, or a small cyclone less destructive than a whirlwind. We there referred to any the same cyclone. As a cyclone contracts it circles more swiftly, and becomes more destructive; as it expands, it loses power. But it is the contraction of a large cyclone which produces the most terrible effects. A cyclone which is small when first formed can only become destructive by contracting till it is yet smaller, and then, of course, the range of its destructive action is limited to a narrow track. Some cyclones have been so small that when they have so narrowed as to work mischief their track has been a mere lane compared with the broad highways of destruction traversed by their larger brethren. Such are the cyclonic storms generated in the valley of the Mississippi. A large river may be compared to an ocean current as a storm-breeder, but, being much narrower, the cyclonic storms generated by a river are much more limited in extent. "The track of these tornadoes," says Maury, "is called a 'windroad,' because they make an avenue through the woods straight along, and as clear of trees as if the old denizens of the forest had been cleared away with an axe. I have seen these trees, three or four feet in diameter, torn up by the roots, and the top with its limbs lying next the hole whence the root came."

Fortunately, it happens not unfrequently that the chief fury of these whirlwinds is expended in the upper air. Indeed, very often, terrible

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storms are raging high in air, as can be seen by the behaviour of the fleecy clouds, when it is calm or but a slight breeze is blowing at the surface. The upper parts of forest trees have been torn off while the lower branches have scarcely moved, and houses placed on a hill have been wrecked when others in a valley scarce a hundred feet lower have not suffered at all. Jameson thus describes the progress of a storm in the valley of the Ohio: "I heard a distant murmuring sound of an extraordinary nature. As I rose to my feet, and looked towards the southwest, I observed a yellowish oval spot, the appearance of which was quite new to me. Little time was left me for consideration, as the next moment a smart breeze began to agitate the taller trees. It increased to an unexpected degree, and already the smaller branches and twigs were seen falling in a slanting direction towards the ground. Two minutes had scarcely elapsed when the whole forest before me was in fearful motion. Turning instinctively toward the direction from which the wind blew, I saw, to my great astonishment, that the noblest trees of the forest bent their lofty heads for awhile, and, unable to stand against the blast, were falling into pieces. First, the branches were broken off with a crackling noise, then went the upper parts of the massy trunks, and in many places whole trees of gigantic size were falling entire to the ground. So rapid was the progress of the storm that, before I could think of taking measures to insure my safety, the hurricane was passing opposite the place where I stood. Never can I forget the scene which at that moment presented itself. The tops of the trees were seen moving, in the strangest manner, in the central current of the tempest, which carried along with it a mingled mass of twigs and foliage that completely obscured the view. Some of the largest trees were seen bending and writhing under the gale, others suddenly snapped across, and many, after a momentary resistance, fell uprooted to the earth. The mass of twigs, branches, foliage, and dust that moved through the air, was whirling onward like a cloud of feathers, and, on passing, disclosed a wide space filled with broken trees, naked stumps, and heaps of shapeless ruins, which marked the path of the tempest. This space was about one fourth of a mile in breadth, and to my imagination resembled the dried-up bed of the Mississippi, with its thousands of snags and sawyers strewed in the sand and inclined in various degrees. The horrible noise resembled that of the great cataracts of Niagara, and as it howled along in the track of the desolating tempest produced a feeling in my mind which it were impossible to describe. The principal force of the hurricane was now over, although millions of twigs and small branches that had been brought from a great distance were seen following the blast as if drawn onwards by some mysterious power. They even floated in the air for some hours after." . . . After crossing the track of the storm to his own house, which stood close by, he found to his surprise "that there had been little wind in the neighbourhood, although in the streets and gardens many twigs and branches had fallen in a manner which excited great surprise."

When whirlwinds such as these occur in more thickly-peopled regions, effects as terrible as those produced by a cyclone are sometimes experienced. Thus on the 19th of August, 1845, a whirlwind occurred in the department of Seine Inférieure, which is remembered to this day in Normandy as if it had happened but yesterday. The barometer fell suddenly more than two inches. Very soon after it was observed that along a certain track the sea at Havre was disturbed by a tempest, while outside the track the sea was relatively calm. The whirlwind soon reached the land. The large mills at Monville, in a valley near the railway between Dieppe and Rouen, was suddenly blown down. It fell as if a hundred batteries had discharged their fire at once upon it. Hundreds of factory women were buried beneath the ruins. The few who escaped could not understand that in the midst of calm a hurricane had suddenly arisen. They believed for awhile that the end of the world had arrived. Men were hurled over hedges; others were cut to pieces by the machinery which had been whirled about in the air; others, without being actually hurt, were so terrified that they died from the effects of the fright, in the course of a few days. Whole rooms and walls were turned upside down, so as to be no longer recognisable. At other points the buildings were literally pulverised, and their site swept clean. Planks, measuring a yard long, five inches wide, and nearly half an inch thick, archives and papers, were carried to distances of 15 to 25 miles. Trees situated in the track of the storm were blown down and dried up. The extent of the ground thus devastated was as much as nine miles in length. Manifestly this was a case in which a whirlwind had descended and then risen again, for the track increased from 30 yards in width at Clères to about 300 yards near Monville, decreasing again to 100 yards near the Seine at Canteleu.

One of the most singular whirlwinds on record is that which devastated Chatenay, near Paris, in June 1839. We are told by Flammarion that it "burnt up the trees that lay within its circumference, and uprooted those which were upon its line of passage; the former, in fact, were found with the side which was exposed to the storm completely scorched and burnt, whereas the opposite side remained fresh and green. Thousands of large trees were blown down, and lay all one way like wheat sheaves. An apple tree was carried over 200 yards on to a group of oaks and elms. Houses were gutted inside without being blown down. Several roofs were carried off as if they were kites." But the strangest effect of all was the following: "An inside wall was cut into five nearly equal parts of eight yards each; the first, the third, and the fifth were laid in one direction; the second and the fourth in an exactly opposite direction."

Fortunately for the inhabitants of the temperate zones, the storms which can be compared, as respects the actual force of the wind, with the cyclone in tropical regions are usually much narrower in range. Even the great storm of 1703 was not equal in fury to the cyclone as it is

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known in the West Indies, in the North Pacific, in the China Seas, and in India. Nor are the storms around Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope so terrible, though they raise higher seas, because of the wider range over which they travel. In a West Indian storm, the waters of the Gulf of Mexico have been known to be raised 30 feet, and to be carried so far and so high inland that a ship has ridden at anchor over land far above the highest tide-mark. The *Ledbury Snow* rode out such a storm, and when it abated "found herself high up on the dry land, and discovered that she had let go her anchor among the tree-tops on Elliott's Key."

We have seen that as there are special regions where great cyclones occur more frequently than elsewhere, so there are special seasons when cyclones may be expected in particular regions. The following facts may be added to those already mentioned. In the West Indies cyclones occur principally in August and September, when the south-east monsoons are at their height, unlike the hurricanes of the Indian Ocean, which occur at the changing of the monsoons. In the China Seas the typhoons, or white squalls, occur at the changing of the monsoons. As the West Indian cyclones follow the course of the Gulf Stream, so the typhoons follow the course of the great oceanic current which passes around the East Indian Archipelago, the shores of China, and the Japanese islands. In the open Pacific Ocean storms are infrequent, as also in the South Atlantic and South Indian Oceans. The great storms which sometimes rage around Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope are not cyclonic in character.

There are those who assert that besides the seasonal vicissitudes just mentioned other well-marked periodic variations may be recognised in the occurrence of cyclones. Amongst other periods they note one which is already celebrated in science, the eleven-year period, in which magnetic changes range from maximum through minimum to maximum again, and in which sun-spots increase, diminish, and again increase in number. It certainly does not appear at all impossible that the varying condition of the sun, shown by the existence of many spots at one time and few spots or none at another, should affect the condition of the earth's atmosphere. It is not sufficient to show, as an American observer, Professor Langley, of Pittsburgh, has recently done, that the spots on the sun's face can reduce but to a very minute degree the emission of solar heat. It is not, indeed, at all likely that the sun-spots diminish the total emission of heat, or even of light. They themselves are dark, and represent regions, therefore, where less light, and as Professor Langley has shown, less heat also, are emitted. But they indicate the perturbed condition of the sun. We know certainly that the coloured flames are more numerous and larger when the sun is most spotted, that eruptions then occur more frequently, that metallic vapours are then more freely ejected into the sun's sierra, and there is every reason to believe that the general surface of the sun—the photosphere, as it is called—then glows with a more

intense heat, in consequence of the same perturbing influences which affect the solar flames, and produce the spots themselves. It certainly seems, from experiments which have been made at Greenwich, that the heat received by the earth each year is not constant, but varies in such a manner as to indicate that the cause of change lies without the earth. It will very probably be found, not indeed that sun-spots cause an excess of heat (any more than comets do), but that the same causes which produce sun-spots excite the sun to a degree of greater activity, and that thus the years of many sun-spots are years of great heat. There would be nothing very surprising or novel in such a conclusion, nor would it be in the least degree inconsistent with the views of those who have maintained (like Sir J. Herschel) that man cannot hope to obtain from solar observations any means of predicting the weather. As he himself said, in a passage which has been coolly appropriated by supporters of the contrary doctrine: "Looking to the sun as the great source of all meteorological action it might most reasonably be expected that such indications" (as sun-spots) "of an activity of some sort going on in its very photosphere, in the actual visible laboratory of its light and heat, would correspond to some difference in its supply of both; which recurring periodically, at stated intervals, must, one would think, manifest itself in some effect or other on our weather and climates." But he went on to say, "Such, however, does not yet appear to be the case." Even if it were certainly shown, instead of the contrary, that disturbances in the earth's atmosphere follow the eleven-year solar period, the fact could only be discovered by terrestrial observations. To know that the sun was affected by changes having the same period, not merely in length, but maximum for maximum, and minimum for minimum, would be in itself interesting, but it would not in the slightest degree help us to a knowledge of coming terrestrial weather. We cannot possibly have better evidence from the sun than we can obtain from the earth.

Even if we knew certainly in what year to expect cyclones in particular regions, we should not gain much by the knowledge. We know now in what months they are most likely to rage, but the knowledge does not avail to enable men to provide against the destructive effects which a cyclone produces when it does come. Nothing but a knowledge of the very time and place where the cyclone was to be expected would have enabled the inhabitants of the region lately devastated to have saved themselves from its effects. Now if there is any hope that men will be able one day to predict beforehand the time and place of a great cyclone or hurricane, it surely must be by carefully examining the records of storms which have occurred on the earth, not by observations on the sun-spots, whose most marked and characteristic period has not yet been satisfactorily associated with any phenomena of our earth, except those of terrestrial magnetism.

But we have no reason for believing that cyclones occur more frequently in sun-spot years than when the sun is free from spots, or vice

vered. It is easy to cite instances of great storms occurring in the same region, when the sun has been either without spots or covered with many spots. For this purpose we need not go beyond the region where the great cyclone of October 31st occurred. During the present year the sun has shown very few spots. We are in fact now very near the minimum of the sun-spot period, if not actually at that phase. In the year 1864 the sun showed many spots. We find from Schwabe's records that that astronomer observed the sun on 325 days in the year 1864, and that there were only four days in which no spots were visible. No less than 130 new groups of spots made their appearance, the number in 1863 being only 124, and on 1865, only 93. Now in October 1864 a gale occurred in the same region which was devastated by the recent gale. All the ships in harbour at Calcutta were swept from their moorings and driven one upon another in inextricable confusion. "Fearful," we read, "as was the loss of life and property in Calcutta harbour, the destruction on land was yet greater. A vast wave swept for miles over the surrounding country, embankments were destroyed, and whole villages with their inhabitants were swept away. Fifty thousand souls, it is believed, perished in this fearful hurricane." We see, then, that a terribly destructive hurricane may occur in the same region during a year when the sun is marked by many spots, and also during a year like the present when he shows few or none. If it be urged that the connection between the occurrence of cyclones and the sun's condition is not of so rough a nature as our argument appears to assume—that averages rather than special storms must be considered, or that perhaps some minor features of cyclones are affected by the sun's condition, we answer that this may be very true, but if it is, it does not affect our position. The foreknowledge of variations in the average number of cyclones can be of no practical use. Moreover, periodic variations, if such exist, in the average number of cyclonic storms, can be most satisfactorily ascertained by direct meteorological observations, and whether they agree or not with sun-spot variations is a matter of no meteorological importance.

If there are in reality any regularly recurring periods in weather phenomena, we can only hope to recognise them by the careful examination of meteorological records. It appears to us that those already made have not been sufficiently examined, and their careful analysis by competent persons would be more likely to afford useful results than the same amount of labour devoted to the accumulation of fresh records. Of course, if any satisfactory results are to be obtained, meteorological observations must be continued steadily. But it certainly does seem as though some few among the persons who have meteorological matters under their charge, might devote their attention to the work of analysing the millions of observations already collected. Even if it is impossible, as we are disposed for our own part to fear, to deduce any system for predicting weather more than a few hours or a day or two in advance, yet

this at least might be done for many regions of the earth, which at present have no warning, even for an hour, of the approach of the most desolating hurricanes. Telegraphic communication, especially as we may hope to see it developed in the coming years, might be employed much more extensively than at present. Thus our own country, which warns countries to the east of coming storms, but receives no warnings, might receive useful intimation from the United States and the West Indies (remote though they are) of the advance of great cyclonic disturbances upon us from the neighbourhood of the West Indies, Florida, and so forth. The further progress of great south-westerly disturbances towards our shores might be learned also from ships which, sailing towards the United States, have encountered rough weather when two or three days' sail from their destination. Ships making for Halifax or St. John's might afford even later intelligence. It is probable that in nearly every case, and certain that in many cases, cyclonic disturbances which have rounded the West Indian part of the great storm-C and travelled along the shores of the United States beyond Hatteras (generally overlapping the land) pursue their course across the Atlantic, though with gradually diminishing force, until they reach Europe. Probably a law would be found to connect their motions, on the western part of their track, and the direction along which they would strike the shores of Europe. Storms which, after rounding the West Indies, pass towards the north-east, without closely approaching the United States, may usually reach the shores of Spain, or the Bay of Biscay, while those which overlap the south-eastern States of America, may pass across the Atlantic on a more northerly track, and make for the British Isles, or pass even north of Scotland to the shores of Norway. As it is probable that very few really fierce hurricanes reach us from the south-west which have not first been felt on the western side of the Atlantic, it would be worth while to analyse very carefully all that can be learned respecting the course of such storms. And certainly the expense of telegraphic communication from the other side of the Atlantic would not be worth considering in comparison with the advantage derived from early intimation of the approach of great hurricanes towards the shores of Europe. In other regions, and especially in the tropics, telegraphic communication might be much more readily and effectively employed in announcing the approach of hurricanes. There are reasons for believing that the great cyclone of October last traversed a course which at several points touched places whence news of the advancing storm might have been telegraphed to the threatened region. Although little could have been done to prevent the destruction to property which the cyclone caused, many thousands of lives (probably more than two hundred thousand) might have been saved if half a day's or even half an hour's warning had been given.

A Fashionable Bath in the Olden Time.

PERHAPS there are few places respecting which we possess so many minute and curious traits of social history as the little Swiss watering-place of Baden, in the Canton Aargau. The very name of it is unknown to the greater part of the cosmopolitan flying squadron of tourists who scour Europe annually east, west, north, and south; from Trouville to Carlsbad, from Monaco to Pyrmont. A quiet, carpet-slipped kind of townlet is Baden in Aargau now-a-days; yet it has seen brave doings, and received fine folks in its time. And, luckily, there are extant various contemporary chronicles which shew forth for us the quaint humours and queer doings of the place in very lively colours.

That the ubiquitous Roman was here, knew all about the warm medicinal springs, left marble bath pavements and leaden pipes to attest his presence, and fortified the so-called *Castellum Thermarum* on the height where some rude Helvetian fortress had already stood in the dim ages,—all this the gentle reader will probably be willing to accept on my bare word. Tacitus, in speaking of the difficulty of defending the *Castellum Thermarum* against Cæcina, uses the phrase "*dilapsis vetustate mœnibus*;" so that even in classic days the castle—commonly called throughout the middle ages *der Stein von Baden*, or Stone of Baden,—could boast of a respectable antiquity, and had its "good old times" behind it. After the fall of the Roman power came the turn of Alemanni, and Franks, and Burgundians, and a long *et cætera* of barbarous, semi-barbarous, and—to borrow a phrase from the music-book—demi-semi-barbarous tribes, all fighting, and struggling, and plundering, and burning, tramping, in a fierce and breathless fashion, along their allotted course through the ages, and all to be but dimly descried by the keenest-eyed historian through a great cloud of dust and smoke, and the twilight of so distant a past.

When Charlemagne's mighty empire was broken up after his death, Baden came to be a part of Germany under the *Römisches Reich*; and it was known in the tenth century as "The Bath of the Three Kings, in Upper Swabia, by Switzerland." Then, through various vicissitudes, it fell to the house of Habsburg, whose original *Stamm-Schloss*, the cradle of the race, stands in ruins on a hill but a few miles away, above Schinznach, to this day. The *Stein von Baden* brought nothing but ill fortune to the Habsburgers. By a singular fatality three members of that house sallied forth from the old castle to meet death or defeat, on three different occasions. Duke Albert, of Austria, who succeeded King

Adolph as Roman *Reichskönig*, passed the last night of his life here. On the next morning, that of the 1st of May, 1308, he was murdered by his nephew Johann, and being left dying by the roadside, is said to have had his wounds staunched by a poor peasant woman, in whose charitable arms he breathed his last. The legend has often been illustrated by pen and pencil. Again, Duke Leopold, of Austria, held a council of war in the castle of Baden, wherein it was resolved to attack the rebellious Swiss,—in revolt against the house of Austria,—on two sides, and the proud duke caused cords and ropes to be provided to bind and hang the insolent peasants, whom he made very sure of overcoming. He set forth, with a brilliant train of nobles and an army of nine thousand men, full of arrogant confidence, to chastise these common folks. But the common folks held their ground in a rather unexpected fashion; and in the memorable battle of Morgarten (1315), achieved so complete and glorious a victory over their high-born assailants, that Duke Leopold, who barely escaped with his life from the field, was compelled a year afterwards to make peace with them. Yet once again: another Duke Leopold, nephew of the preceding one, and great-grandson of King Albert, held, in the year 1386, another great council of war, in the grim old fortress; the result of which was that he, with the flower of his knighthood, was overthrown and slain at the battle of Sempach, wherein Arnold von Winkelried made himself a name immortal in Swiss story. So singular a series of disasters might surely have justified a superstitious belief on the part of the Habsburgers, that the *Stein von Baden* was a spot fatal to their race.

All through the stormy fifteenth century there were feuds and fights in, and about, Baden in Aargau; and yet, strange as it may seem, the brief intervals of peace were filled up with a life of jollity, revelry, and merry-making, of which an eye-witness has left us a lively picture, in a letter written from the baths in the year 1417. As a Swiss writer at the beginning of the present century naïvely observes, "It is hard to believe that in such unquiet times the most unbridled enjoyment reigned on the very spot where but a short time previous war had been raging; yet Poggio, who was in Baden two years after the conquest" (he alludes to the conquest of Baden by Berne on behalf of the Swiss Confederation in 1415), "has shown us sufficiently what drinking, singing, and love-making went on here in those days." The Poggio above mentioned is no other than the Florentine Giovanni Francesco Poggio Bracciolini, the celebrated *savant* and restorer of letters in the fifteenth century. He was born in Tuscany in 1380, and died Chancellor of the Florentine Republic in 1459, at the ripe age of seventy-nine. He had been Secretary to three Popes; and it was in the suite of his Holiness Pope John the Twenty-third, that he visited Constance during the Council of 1414, and thence found his way to Baden. The letter in question is addressed to his brother *savant* Niccolò Nicoli; and exists in Poggio Bracciolini's printed works. The learned gentleman, albeit a frequenter

of Popes, and therefore, one might suppose, subject to edifying influences, had, alas ! but too clearly failed to profit by such advantages if they came in his way ; for the character of much of his writing is distinctly immoral, and warns us not to place too implicit faith in his rather highly coloured descriptions of certain phases of Baden life. It would, indeed, be a curious, and not uninteresting, study of national character, were we able so to analyse the narrative of Poggio Bracciolini as to detect where, and to what extent, it deviates from the simple truth, by reason of the narrator's Italian tone of mind and habits of thought. Nevertheless, the old Florentine's letter is full of quaint and interesting traits of manners, whose genuineness cannot be doubted. And probably those cases wherein he distorts the truth are all due rather to mistaken inferences from the facts observed, than to wilful mis-statements of the facts themselves ; and the inferences are such as were in all likelihood considered very natural and self-evident by his Florentine acquaintances in the year of grace one thousand four hundred and seventeen !

He begins his epistle to Nicoli thus : " I write thee this letter from the baths here, whither I have been driven by gout in the hands ; and I deem that the place merits a description, not only for its situation and pleasantness, but for the customs of the guests who sojourn here, and their manner of taking the baths." After a discursive comparison of these baths with those of Puteoli, " to which nearly all Rome was wont to resort for pleasure," and a declaration that, except on the score of natural beauty, Baden is greatly to be preferred to Puteoli, and indeed may be said to rival Cypria (!) in its manifold and seductive attractions, Bracciolini proceeds to give some account of his journey from Constance. He came down the Rhine in a boat as far as Schaffhausen, and thence " by reason of the great fall which the river makes at that place," went about a mile and a half on foot to Kaiserstuhl. The learned traveller here remarks that, on approaching the Falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen, he was reminded of what is told respecting the cataracts of the Nile : namely, that the great roar and din of the waters causes the inhabitants on the banks to become deaf. It is worthy of note that no earlier mention of the Falls of the Rhine is known than this of the Florentine writer.

" At last," says he, " we reached Baden, a sufficiently prosperous town situated in a valley surrounded and shut in by mountains, and on the banks of a green and swift running river, which falls into the Rhine about a mile and a half below the town." This statement is not literally accurate, inasmuch as the river Limmat on which Baden is situated, falls into the Aar, the Aar into the Reuss, and the Reuss into the Rhine. He proceeds : " At about a quarter of an hour's journey from the town, and close down beside the river, there is a great open space surrounded by splendid inns, able to receive a large number of guests, and here are the baths. Each inn has its own bath, which is used only by those who are lodged in the house. The total number of private and public baths amounts to about thirty. For the lowest class of the people,

there exist two spacious baths open on all sides, wherein men, women, youths and maidens, in a word the whole of the populace which congregates here, bathe all together. . . . I have often diverted myself with this spectacle, and have at the same time wondered in my own mind at the simplicity of these good people, who neither trouble themselves to turn their eyes upon it, nor speak nor think the least evil on the subject. As to the private baths within the hostelrys, they are very handsomely decorated, and are common to both sexes. There is, to be sure, a dividing panel between the men and the women; but it is pierced by several windows with flaps to let down, and the two parties can drink and talk together and not only see, but touch each other. Moreover, there are upper galleries where men assemble to chat and watch the bathers. It is free also to every one to pay a visit to his neighbours' baths. . . . Very often they feast in the bath itself on various dishes contributed by all the members of the company, and placed on a floating table. Ladies and gentlemen eat together. In the house where I bathed I was one day invited to such a banquet. I contributed my share to it, but did not go myself, albeit warmly pressed to do so; and this not out of shyness,"—an almost superfluous assurance, oh erudite and epicurean Poggio Bracciolini!—"which is looked on here as rustic ignorance, but because I did not understand their language. For it appeared to me but a dull business that an Italian, ignorant of the German tongue, should pass a whole day in the bath merely eating and drinking, and remaining dumb and speechless in the midst of a company of fair women. Two of my friends, however, did go. They ate and drank and frolicked, conversed by means of an interpreter, fanned the ladies, and, in a word, enjoyed themselves mightily. They wore linen garments, such as the men put on here when they are invited into the ladies' baths. I looked on from the gallery and saw everything: the manners and customs of these good people, their good eating, and their agreeable, unconstrained behaviour. Wonderful it is to see with what innocent-mindedness they live, and with what easy confidence the men behold strangers in familiar conversation with their wives! Nothing gives them uneasiness; they put the best construction on all things, or rather they take no notice at all. There is nothing so grave but the customs of these worthy folks make it appear light as a feather. . . .

"Some of these baths, as I have said already, are used in common by men and women if they belong to the same family, or are united by ties of friendship. Many a one will visit three or four such baths daily, and pass the greater part of his time in them with singing, drinking, and—after the bath—dancing. Even in the water some set themselves to playing instruments. Nothing can be more enchanting to see and to hear than when blooming young maidens in the full freshness of their beauty sing to the accompaniment of these instruments, with fair, open countenances, goddess-like in form and motion, their light draperies floating on the water, and each one appearing like a new Venus. They have, too, a

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charming custom, when they see gentlemen watching them from the galleries, of playfully begging an alms of them. Then the men throw down, chiefly to the prettier among the girls, small coins which they catch in their hands, or with their outspread linen garments, whilst each struggles to be beforehand with her neighbour. It is customary, also, to throw down to them wreaths woven of all manner of flowers, with which they adorn their heads."

All these proceedings had so great a charm for Poggio Bracciolini, and, to use his own phrase, "so enlivened his spirits," that notwithstanding he himself bathed twice daily, he employed almost all the rest of his time in paying visits from bath to bath and in showering down wreaths and small coins on the frolicsome nymphs, like the rest of the world. "For," says he, "amidst this continual noise, of talking and singing, there is no time for reading, nor even for thinking. And to attempt being the only wise man here would have been the height of folly; especially for one who is no self-tormenting ascetic, and who deems nothing human alien to himself."

A little further on, he has a passage which is worth transcribing as the account by an eye-witness of a diversion in vogue at a fashionable watering-place four centuries and a half ago. "Besides these amusements," (the bathing, singing, fiddling, talking, flower-throwing, eating and drinking, aforesaid), "there is yet another of no little charm. Behind the hostelrys, and close to the borders of the river, there lies a great meadow shaded by many trees. Here, after dinner, all the guests assemble and enjoy themselves with song and dance and divers games. Most of them play at ball; not, however, after our fashion, but thus: there is a ball with little bells inside it, and this is thrown by a lady or gentleman to the person he or she likes best. All run after the ball, for whoever catches it has won, and throws it in his turn to the object of his preference. Everybody stands with outstretched hands ready to seize it, and he who holds it, makes as though he would throw it first to one person and then to another. I must pass over a thousand other pleasant diversions, for the sake of brevity, and have only given thee a little sample of one or two, in order that thou mightest have some conception what a great company of Epicureans we are here. . . . Innumerable, moreover, is the crowd of noble and plebeian folks who come hither from a distance of a hundred miles, not so much for the cure, as for pleasure. Many make a pretext of bodily ailments who are only sick in mind. You see many handsome women arrive here without their husbands, without relatives, and only escorted by a couple of maids and a man servant; or else by some old frump of an aunt, who is more easily to be deceived than bribed." (This observation is characteristic, and marks a state of things precisely contrary to that which Poggio had been accustomed to on the other side of the Alps). "Each one adorns herself as far as may be with gold, silver, and precious stones; so that one might suppose they had come, not to take the baths, but to some splendid nuptials. Even nuns

—or I should rather call them priestesses of Flora—abbots, monks, brethren of various orders, and priests, live here in greater freedom than any of the others. The latter even frequent the women's baths, adorn their hair with wreaths, and altogether release themselves from the yoke of their vows. All, in short, have but one object: namely, to banish melancholy, to seek amusement, and to have no thought or care save to enjoy life and its pleasures."

Thus the learned secretary of his Holiness, Pope John the Twenty-fourth! And that his picture, albeit as a modern Swiss writer remarks, somewhat overdrawn and exaggerated, yet is not wholly, nor even to any serious extent, a false and misleading one, there are abundant contemporary records to prove. The writer in question, a gentleman of Zürich named David Hess, who has left a lively sketch of the condition of Baden in his day—the end of the last and beginning of the present century—observes that "a feverish thirst for enjoyment seems to have possessed all classes of his Swiss forefathers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries." Their physical robustness, the rapid increase of wealth, the seductive examples of the clergy, and the easy method of appeasing a troublesome conscience, all fostered this unbridled condition of things. Moreover, all classes were assailed by continual temptations from without. Foreign princes employed all methods of corruption and bribery to enlist the warlike Swiss in their service; treaties, or the justice of the cause, were not considered. Whosoever paid the most got the most, and the best soldiers; whence arose the contemptuous proverb, "No money, no Swiss."

As to Bracciolini's description of the mundane behaviour of the clergy who visited Baden, there are various corroborative facts to be gleaned on the subject from archives and ancient documents. There were, before the days of Bracciolini's visit, special baths at Baden set apart for the members of religious bodies; and probably these had originally—as in several still older baths—rights of sanctuary, and were places of refuge for those pursued by the laws, or by their enemies. But by degrees the clergy, the monks, and the nuns, associated with the laity, and took part in the enjoyments and amusements of the profane world, as Bracciolini was witness. Long before Baden belonged to the Swiss Confederation, the canons of the Carolinian foundation in Zürich were accustomed to resort thither very frequently. In their statutes, renewed after a fire which took place in 1346, it is thus written: "A canon may make an eight days' visit to Baden in the spring, and in the autumn on account of his health, and may nevertheless receive the income of his prebend even as though he had been all the time attending divine service; but should he remain longer than eight days, he shall be considered to be absent."

In the year 1415, Anastasia von Hohen-Klingen, abbess of the convent of the Frauenmünster, in Zürich, sold to the nuns of Oetenbach her extensive farm of Stadelhofen, which stretched for several miles

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along the lake, together with all the rights and privileges belonging thereto, in order to defray the expenses of one visit to Baden with the price of it. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the nuns of Töss expended a large sum of money in the purchase of various Papal bulls and indulgences, the scope of which was to permit them to visit Baden, and to wear the garments of the world there under the religious habit, in case—so runs the permission—they should not be able to obtain within their convent all the needful means for restoring their health. One Ulrich Trinkler, of Zürich, who was elected abbot of Cappel in 1492, obtained a scandalous notoriety by his visits to Baden—visits which were extremely injurious in every way to the interests of the monastery he ruled over. During his stay at the baths, which often lasted for several weeks, he daily kept open table for more than twenty persons. He was, moreover, strongly suspected of still graver offences against morality and decorum, in which offences certain nuns were said to be sharers; and at length his conduct became so intolerable, that he was turned out of his abbey.

When the clergy gave such examples, we may be sure that the laity were not behindhand in luxury and looseness of living. Amongst those who most distinguished themselves in these particulars was the Burgo-master Waldmann, of Zürich. Singularly enough he had instituted some very severe social and sumptuary regulations in his native town; but with a not altogether unexampled incongruity between theory and practice, he made himself notorious for the expensiveness and immorality of his life at the baths of Baden. On one occasion he actually appeared there accompanied by his wife and a complete harem of six ladies, like his Majesty the Shah of Persia, or the venerable Mr. Brigham Young. At the same time he made an attempt to get forcibly into his power, by the help of one of the bath attendants whom he suborned for the purpose, a beautiful woman of Bâle who happened to attract his admiration. The attempt, however, failed. A swarm of boon companions followed him in his Baden excursions, and feasted with him, and at his cost. And it was from one of these Baden revels that he was suddenly recalled to Zürich, there to end his bold and prodigal career on the scaffold. Strange peeps these, and undoubtedly veracious ones, of the "good old times," and such as make one, on the whole, more content to live in this nineteenth century—its vulgar prose, chimney-pot hats, and shoddy, notwithstanding!

Messer Poggio Bracciolini is by no means the only well-known man of letters who has left us his impressions of the little Swiss Baden. A greater than he, no less a personage than Michel de Montaigne, gives an account of it in his *Journal du Voyage de Michel de Montaigne en Italie par la Suisse et l'Allemagne en 1580 et 81*. The original MS. of this journey was found in an old chest in Montaigne's château in the year 1775, and made known to the world by Monsieur de Querlon. One portion of it, and precisely that which concerns Baden, is written by the

hand of his servant. It was, in all probability, dictated by Montaigne, who, in those portions of the work not written by his own hand, speaks of himself in the third person.

"We repaired to Baden, a little town with a separate suburb, where are the baths. It is a Catholic town, under the protection of the Eight Cantons of Switzerland, wherein have been held divers great assemblies of princes. We lodged not in the town, but in the aforesaid suburb, which is quite at the foot of the hill, on the brink of a river, or rather a torrent, called the *Limaq (sic)*, which flows from the Lake of Zürich. There are two or three uncovered public baths, used only by the poorer sort. The others, of which there is a great number, are enclosed within the houses, and are parted and divided into several little private cells, open or covered, and let out with the chambers. The said little cells are as delicately and handsomely fitted as possible, with pipes of the hot water running into each; the lodgings very magnificent. In the house where we lay, there have been as many as three hundred mouths to feed in one day. There was still a great company when we were there, and fully a hundred and seventy beds for the use of the guests. There are seventeen cooking stoves and eleven kitchens, and in a lodging hard by ours, fifty furnished chambers. The walls of the rooms are covered with escutcheons of the gentlemen who have lodged there."

There were still some remains of this custom of covering the walls with the coats-of-arms of noble guests, painted on wooden panels, to be seen in the year 1817. In a room of the *Hinterhof*, called the *Herzogenseaal*, or Duke's Chamber, there existed a great panel painted in oil colours, with the arms of the Zills, Zollikofers, and Seuters, of St. Gallen, and gilt. It bore date A.D. 1613. In another room was a still more curious specimen of this custom. It was presented to the hostelry of the *Hinterhof* in 1620, by the magistracy of Zürich (probably after they had been visiting Baden *in corpore*, as Herr David Hess says), and bears a picture of the Judgment of Solomon, to which the arms of the nine judges and the clerk of the court serve as a frame. The subject was doubtless selected in complimentary allusion to the Solomonic wisdom of the exponents of the law in Zürich. There was, too, the coat-of-arms of a Dutch ambassador, Petrus Valkenier and "Carola Bex ab Oersbeek," his wife, bearing date 1704, which Hess saw. I believe no such thing is to be found in Baden at the present day.

Here are some more gleanings from Montaigne's description of Baden in 1580:—"The town stands somewhat high on the shoulder of the hill, is small, and very handsome, as are almost all the towns in this country; for, besides that they make their streets more wide and open than ours, the open spaces (*places*) more ample, and many richly glazed windows everywhere, they have a custom of painting the outside of almost all the houses with devices which furnish a very pleasant spectacle. Moreover, there is no town without divers fountains of water, which stand at the crossways, handsomely built of stone or wood.

The water of the baths has an odour of sulphur, like that of *Aigues chaudes* (*sic*) in Béarn and others. The heat of it is moderate, as at Barbotan (county of Armagnac), or Aigues Caudes, and the baths, therefore, mild and pleasant. Whosoever has to conduct ladies to a bath, where they wish to bathe decorously and delicately, may carry them to Baden. For there they will be alone in the bath"—(manners have changed, it would seem, since the "good old times" of Poggio Bracciolini, a century and a half previous)—"which resembles a very rich cabinet, well glazed, lined with panels of painted wood, and floored conveniently. Each bath is furnished with seats and little tables for reading, or playing at, whilst one is in the water. The bather has a supply of water as much as he pleases, and may empty and refill his bath as often as he will. Then there is the commodity of having one's chamber close to the bath, and fine promenades along the banks of the river, besides artificial promenades in covered galleries. . . . The waters are somewhat *fade*, and flat to the taste, and have a little flavour of sulphur and a slight saline sharpness. The people of the country drink them but little, and use them principally for bathing in. And whilst they are bathing, they cause themselves to be cupped and bled to so great a degree, that I have sometimes seen the two public baths appear quite crimson."

There are several other confirmations of this revolting custom, which endured—although carried on with more decency and privacy—to the early years of this century. It is alluded to in a voluminous work upon Baden and its waters, written by a certain Dr. Pantaleon, of Bâle, and published in 1578, where the writer speaks of the immoderate use of cupping, from a physician's point of view, and expatiates on its evil effects; adding, however, that the people—especially those of the lower orders—were so infatuated with it, that they did not consider themselves to have bathed properly unless they were "stuck full of cupping-glasses as a hedgehog of quills!" And the habit was still in force in the year 1817.

Monsieur de Montaigne proceeds to give some very minute details of the action of the waters on himself, together with the quantity he drank of them, the number of times he drank, and so forth; all of which the reader may well be spared. One or two traits of manners which he gives, *en passant*, are worth a brief mention, however. Thus he remarks that on one occasion he went into the bath "at nine o'clock in the morning, whilst the others were dining," and that he only remained in it half-an-hour, for that "those of the country, who stay there *all day long, playing and drinking*, are only up to the middle in water, whereas he (Montaigne) lay extended at full length in his bath, and was covered with the water to his throat." Further on he observes that it is his habit to be served at table after the fashion of the country he may happen to be in, "in order to learn the diversity of manners and customs," no matter how disagreeable the process of acquiring this information might be, but that

in Switzerland he suffered no inconvenience from it, "except that at table he had only a little cloth half a foot square for a napkin. And the Swiss themselves often do not even unfold this at dinner, albeit they have many sauces and several varieties of pottage; but they always place on the table as many wooden spoons with silver handles as there are persons dining; and no Swiss is ever without a knife, with which he helps himself to everything, and scarcely ever puts his hand in the dish. . . . We immediately became accustomed to the heat of their stoves, and none of us found any inconvenience from them. For when you have got over a certain smell of hot air on first going in, there remains only a pleasant sensation of warmth. M. de Montaigne, who had a stove in his bed-chamber, was mighty content with it, and enjoyed a mild and agreeable temperature all the night. At least, one does not burn either one's face or one's boots (!), and is rid of the smoke which is troublesome in France. Moreover, whereas we on entering the house put on our warm *robes de chambre* lined with fur, they on the contrary remain in their doublet, with uncovered head, and dress themselves warmly only when they go forth into the air again. In our lodging there are still a few chimney-places *à la Française*, but all the best rooms have stoves. The exaction of the payment is a little tyrannical, as it is in all countries—and notably in our own—towards foreigners. Four chambers, furnished with nine beds, of which chambers two had stoves and a bath, cost us one crown a day each for the servants, and four *bats*" (he means *batzen*; the word is still occasionally used in Switzerland), "that is to say, nine *sous* or a little more per head, for the servants. The horses six *bats*, which made about fourteen *sous* per diem. But besides these charges, they added several little extortions, *contrary to their custom*."

However contrary to the custom of Baden innkeepers extortion may have been, there was a form of extortion connected with the baths from which all classes of the population suffered more or less, and which in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries assumed such outrageous proportions as to become the subject of repressive legislation,—for the most part ineffectual. This was the custom of making *Badschenkungen*, or "bath-gifts," and it originated in the following manner: The earlier sittings of the Diet of the Swiss Confederation took place for the most part in Baden, and in the summer season. Inasmuch as the ambassadors of foreign powers were frequently present, and gave a great brilliancy to these assemblies, great numbers of strangers were attracted to Baden; induced to go thither rather by the desire of participating in the gaieties and festivities of the great Seigneurs, than by the virtues of the Baden waters to cure their bodily ailments. Especially were these occasions eagerly seized upon by the good citizens and citizenesses of Zürich, desirous of escaping for a while from the rigidly puritanical tone of manners which the Reformation had stamped upon their town. But, alas! a stay in Baden was a costly matter, and the length of the purse was no more proportional to the length of the pedigree in those times

and places than it is in our own day and country. In order, therefore, to facilitate as much as possible the enjoyment of all the fine and expensive doings at the baths, by worthy burghers and nobles of limited means, their parents, relatives, and friends were in the habit of furnishing them with abundant stores of provisions from Zürich. These, however, soon changed into gifts of money, silver drinking vessels, and other articles of value. The Government of Zürich offered rich presents of this kind to any foreign princes or nobles who came to restore their health at Baden; and by degrees it became customary to send gold and silver plate of more or less value to such members of their own magistracy as visited the baths, and to distinguished clergymen. This usage grew to be so universal, that in time there was scarcely a head of a guild, parson of a parish, or judge of a district, who did not receive all manner of gifts from his fellow members, parishioners, or officials, during his stay in Baden. And when the gifts were not spontaneously offered, there were regularly appointed persons to suggest to the lukewarm the necessity of conforming to this custom, which thus grew into a veritable levy of black-mail.

As early as the year 1414, the Confederation, despite its extreme poverty at that time, managed to make a present to the consort of Archduke Sigismund of Austria, consisting of oxen, sheep, butter, and wine, to the value of seventy florins. But the first bath-gift which excited great attention was made in 1534, to a burgomaster of Zürich, named Diethelm Roust, and was brought to Baden by one hundred and ninety-eight Zürich burghers and yeomen, on foot and horseback! It consisted of a fat ox, which cost over twenty-four florins. The beast was covered with trappings of blue and white cloth; his horns were gilded, and there was fastened between them a blue and white purse containing twenty Rhenish *gulden*. The hundred and ninety-eight men of the escort were all newly clothed in velvet and silk, with plumes of feathers in their caps, and well armed with spears and arquebusses. And in this state they marched with all their bravery to Baden.

But the peaceful citizens of that town no sooner had news of the approach of this imposing body than they took fright, and began to conceive some ugly suspicions as to the object of a visit on so great a scale. Zürich had then but recently embraced the Reformed faith; the Badeners were (and are still) staunch Catholics; and sundry collisions and troubles—some of them very serious ones—had arisen between the adherents of the old and the new religion. In brief, the good citizens of Baden were so uneasy that they sent round to the representatives of the various Swiss Cantons who happened just then to be attending a Diet in Baden, to ask if they had not better shut their gates against the approaching posse of Zürichers! The members of the Diet, however, reassured them, and ordered them to let the escort with its fat ox and its purse of Rhenish *gulden*, and its fine garments of silk and velvet, pass peaceably through the town to the baths beyond, where Burgomaster Roust was

taking the waters. All this was done accordingly; and the next day, when the Zürichers had presented their gift and were on their way home again, the men of Baden,—being perhaps a little ashamed of their previous suspicions,—entertained them hospitably with wine and meat, and presented them with three golden florins into the bargain. The list of names of all the hundred and ninety-eight men who took part in this singular *cortège* is still extant.

In the year 1591 a deputation of the lower order of citizens in Zürich carried to their burgomaster, in Baden, two massive silver beakers, as a bath-gift, and were entertained free of cost during their stay there. It must have been in consequence of the pressure put upon the poorer citizens, to induce them to subscribe to this and other similar costly presents, that a proclamation of the Council of Zürich was made in 1595, forbidding all members of the city guilds to send silver goblets to their guild-masters, or to any other person at the baths of Baden, on pain of a fine of 10*l*. But how utterly vain such prohibitions were, and how the Zürich authorities themselves very speedily broke through and disregarded them, may be gathered from the following facts. In the year 1606 an ox and a sum of money collected amongst the citizens were presented to Burgomaster Bräm, at the Hinterhof in Baden, by a company of noble gentlemen, with much flourishing of trumpets and rolling of drums. In 1609 "my worshipful masters" (the Government of Zürich) sent a silver-gilt goblet, representing the terrestrial globe, and weighing 36½ oz., to Duke Ernest, of Bavaria, Elector of Cologne, who was taking the waters in Baden, and at the same time a stag, some eels, and some salmon! During the last days of this same year (1609) there came out another severe decree of the Zürich authorities, forbidding, on pain of heavy fines, the sending of bath-gifts of silver or silver-gilt vases, goblets, and pitchers, to any person whatsoever, "*except to the burgomaster*;" and giving as one of the reasons for the decree, that "the custom led only to guzzling and drinking at the cost of those to whom the gifts were presented." But this stringent decree met with no better fate than its predecessors; for only three years after its promulgation we find sixty-eight members of the "Guild of the Titmouse" (!) sending a deputation of twelve of their body to Baden, with a gift for Governor Keller of a double silver-gilt vessel, worth 100 florins five *batzen*. In 1615 the masters and companies of the Guild of Tanners sent a piece of silver plate to Governor Kamble; and in 1618 the Governor of Zürich sent to Burgomaster Holzhalb two silver flasks, weighing 219 ozs., and valued at 613 florins. As to the presents sent to Baden, about this period, by private individuals—parishioners to their priests and curates, tenants to their landlords, dependents and connections of great seigneurs to their masters and patrons, &c. &c.—they pass all computation. Decree followed decree, inveighing in ever stronger terms against the extortionate practice of collecting money for bath-gifts, and forbidding them to be made, under ever-increasing penalties; but the laws were absolutely

ineffectual to check the abuse, as, indeed, it was inevitable they should be, when the makers of them gave the example of being the chief breakers of them also. It would be tedious to enumerate even a small number of the enactments against *Badschenkungen* which may still be found in the dusty archives of Zürich, and impossible, within the limits of a stout volume, to describe all the various, singular, and costly gifts recorded to have been made. We must, however, find space for one curious extract from the private memoranda of a respectable citizen of Zürich, who was burgomaster of that town, and attended a Diet of the Confederation in Baden during the year 1665, in his official capacity.

Herr Waser—for such was his worthy name, as the German hath it—availed himself of the opportunity of this official visit to the baths to “make the cure” there, and to bring with him to the Stadthof (the principal inn) the following members of his family, enumerated in his own phrase thus: “My beloved wife, her son by her first marriage, the Guild-master Wertmiller my daughter’s husband, Christopher Geiger, and my cousin Hans Rudolph Waser.” And amidst the cares of office, Herr Bürgermeister Waser finds time not only to put down, like a careful father of a family, the expenses of his stay at the baths (they amounted to 206 florins nineteen *schilling*), but to enter, under the head of “*receipts*,” all the presents he received while at Baden, and the names of those who sent them. These “receipts” are curiously miscellaneous in quality, and amusingly voluminous in quantity. Herr David Hess, of Zürich, in his book upon *Baden in Aargau*, has taken the trouble to sum them up under various categories, from which the following are selected: “In hard cash, fourteen florins, sixteen *schilling*, two *Louis-d’ors*, and three golden ducats; one great stag, one haunch of venison, one fore-quarter of wild boar, four hares, three sheep, two lambs, one quarter of mutton, eight sheep’s trotters; one dish of sweetbread, twenty-five fishes larger and smaller, forty capons, one chicken, eighteen eggs, two geese, twenty pigeons, ten guinea-hens, sixty-three partridges, twelve ortolans, six quails, and two blackcocks; 226 crabs; one pasty; all sorts of salad and radishes, some artichokes, one head of cauliflower, two slices of bread-and-butter (!), one freshly baked household loaf, two rolls, three egg-custards, two great cakes; one ham, eight boxes full of all manner of confectionery, currants, and macaroons, one box of *truscias* (!), two almond-tarts, a loaf of sugar, melons, citrons, and various spices, several apricots. Moreover, a fine state-dinner, namely: one capon, one quarter of a turkey (!), one hare, one partridge, one piece of almond-tart, one ditto of quince-pie, and a candied citron. One little clock. In books, Plautin’s *Histoire Helvétique* and Hottingeri *Historia Ecclesiastica*; and, finally, a gift from two poor Capuchin friars in the Hinterhof, of two little melons, a handful of fennel, and a bunch of flowers!” As *a per contra* he has carefully written down the few (very few) occasions on which he gave back a small portion of the provisions brought to him, as a fee to the bearer!

The Rain-Cloud.

(AFTER THE TAMIL.)

*Kaṭir peru sen ne' vīḍa Kār kuḷam kaṇḍu sendru
Koti tirci kaḍal'ḷ ; eṇṇum Kolkei pō', kuḷayattē,
Mati tanom paḍeitta pērkal Vāḍinōr mukattēci pārār,
Nīti miḱa paḍeittōrk' ivār, Nīleiyillār' iya mārtār.*

“Vivēka Sintāmani.”

YE who are rich, and share
Your wealth and sumptuous fare
But with the rich; nor ever sweetly deign,
That some poor wight may live,
One grain of rice to give,—
List to a Legend of a Cloud of Rain!*

It was a land of rills
And birds:—and giant hills
Rose westward: eastward thundered the broad main.
A green, smooth land,—most fair:
The mild folk living there
Smiled; and had quiet sleep; and loved the rain.

So loamy was the soil
There scarce was need of toil.
The poorest ate, and no man did complain.
So thick the plantains grew
That men the young shoots slew,
That the grown trees might drink up all the rain.

* Music knows the “key-note.” Tamil poetry acknowledges the “key-note of rhyme,” or of an alliterative sound of some distinctive kind, in a poem. That rhythmic key-note, or continuously recurring cadence, is often based upon the subject of the poem. I know many verses in Tamil in which this rule—most arduous to the writer—has been strictly carried out. I have tried to exemplify the custom in my English verses, taking the word *Rain* as the key-note of the rhyme employed.

Great palms grew o'er deep wells,
 Whereby the silver bells
 Of *yuccas* shook. The rajah who did reign
 Rendered the gods due fear,—
 Loved men. And, year by year,
 From South-west and from North-east * came the rain.

Thus was it for a time,
 Whilst in that sunny clime,
 Men like the "Lidless" † lived. Then came a wane;—
 As brightest moons will die,
 Howe'er so clear the sky :—
 And so it came to pass there fell no rain.

Who knows, but that, one day,
 The idle gods at play,
 Cloyed of heaven's joys, and deeming good a bane,
 Desired to hear on high
 A dying nation's cry?
 Give they not poison,—they who give the rain?

That good and ill's their "play," ‡
 Do not our sages say?
 May they not what they make, unmake again?
 Mayhap, in "sport divine,"
 They made your blood and mine;
 May they not shed it, as they shed the rain?

* Alluding to the Indian monsoons. Those districts are, of course, especially favoured, which receive *both* the monsoons, unless their rainfall be exceptionally heavy.

† The immortals, who never sleep, are called in Tamil *imeiyôr*, the "Unwinking Ones." *Viramâmuni*, "the Heroic Devotee,"—i.e. Beschi, the great Jesuit linguist—calls angels *imeiyôr*, those who have no eyelashes—those who can stare, without closing their eyelids, at the *Adi-Bagatôn*, the *Ancient Sun*. A long dissertation, not here necessary, might be written concerning the stanza in which the term occurs in *Viramâmuni's* works—a stanza which is only second in its intrinsic beauty to one that wonderful Oriental scholar ever penned.

‡ A very large number of modern Hindûs believe (Tamil, *tiru-vileiyâttnu*; English, "Divine Pranks") that the gods, in their bliss, like to see, from their unapproachable heights of supremacy, evil as well as good—sight of torture giving a fillip to their rapture. They like to watch the lights and shadows of mortal life. It is "fun" to them to observe agony as well as bliss, in their mortal subjects. They laugh to see men writhe in pain. They are above sympathy. A large number of philosophic Hindûs regard it as an attribute of divinity to be above sympathetic considerations.

So that fair land lay dry ;
 No cloud crept o'er the sky.
 The sun glared down on withering fields of grain.
 Palms by the temple-tank,
 Banyans by river-bank
 Drooped sere : and priests prayed daylong for the rain.

" O come ! " men cried aloud —
 " On elephant-of-cloud,*
 Good Indra come, and ease us of our pain !"
 And round the empty wells
 Brahmans, with tinkling bells,
 Bore the bright gods ; and yet there came no rain.

Women, with tender hands,
 Dug up the burning sands
 Of river-beds, some muddy drop to drain.
 The cotter, with his knife,
 Scooped out the palms' moist life,—
 His old ancestral palms.—Yet came no rain.

The sacred cow lay dead ;
 And loathly vultures fed
 On food from which the holiest must refrain :
 Fish, worshipped oft, now stank
 In dried-up temple-tank ;
 And pearls were scorned—not being drops of rain.

Blessèd is strong sound food,
 In which was no life-blood,
 That man may say—" I eat, but have not slain ! "†
 Blessèd sweet milk,—gods' wine !
 But O, no gift divine
 Like Water,—water of the blessèd rain ! ‡

* An old Sanskrit metaphor.

† This alludes to the Tamil poet Patanattu Pillei's poem in honour of the " One God " of Conjéveram, especially to the stanza beginning—

*Kondrén, anégam uwirei ellâm Kondru, kondru,
 Tindrén, &c.*

‡ A remarkable fact may here be mentioned. One of the oldest, if not the oldest ; one of the greatest, if not absolutely the greatest, of the non-Aryan writers of India,

Let fish and slimy snake
Of briny wave partake ;
And leave the stagnant pool to frog and crane ;
To thee let waters run
Straight from below the sun,—
The shining silver of the rain-bowed rain !

But, in that hour accurst,
That land, nigh dead of thirst,
Saw nectar in the dreg of putrid drain.
The weak folk could not fly ;—
Those barrier-mountains high
Could but be crossed by strong men, filled with rain.

All night the salt waves fell,
Each ringing like a bell,
Sharp on the coral reef's long ruby chain ;
Or, broken and weak, all day,
Crawling, grey-green and grey,
Curled up the garnet sands.—But O no rain !

At length, in solemn state,
Back at its breast as fate,
But hope-bright at its wings, across the main
Sailed up one mighty cloud,
And all the land aloud
Sobbed in its joy—"The Rain ! It comes ! The Rain !"

Now that cloud-demon swept
Nearer. Priests said it wept
For piteous sight of that once-emerald plain.
And as it nearer sailed,
Behind it brightly trailed
The flowing silver of the falling rain.

O gauzy tissue fair,
Floating through lowest air,
Robe-train of angel-cloud o'er a campaign !

Tiruvalluvar, has placed, in his great ethical work, the praise of RAIN as only second to the praise of the immortal and omniscient Father of All. I do not know if any Orientalist has remarked this fact before.—*Vide* "Kural."

But if its texture be
 Dragged o'er the foul, salt sea,—
 O demon-cloud! O hateful, hideous rain!

Wise man, tell thou to me,
 What needs the bloated sea
 Of water, pure fresh water clouds distrain?
 Do not sweet fountains deep*
 Well up, and duly keep
 Its bitter waves half-sweet, without the rain?

With cup, and hollow gourd,
 Peasant and priest and lord,
 Rushed to the sea-shore in tumultuous train.
 A cool wind came. It blew
 Thin spray of airy dew
 Into their gaping mouths—the dew of rain.

The myriads on the shore
 Heard, out at sea, the roar
 Of gushing showers. But as their eyes did strain,—
 The sun flashed out to view,
 The sky, a cloudless blue,
 Glared on those red eyes, gazing for the rain.

Ev'n as your breath will pass,
 From polished brass or glass,
 And softly melt away and leave no stain;
 So passed that cloud away,
 From the bright face of day;
 And all was horrid glare unveiled by rain.

Then that fair cruel sky
 Saw thousands drink and die,
 Of salt sea-water. Many a giddy brain
 Down toppled to the tide.
 Sharks gnawed them as they died;
 And heaven was black with vultures, not with rain.

* And beating up through all his bitter world,
 Like fountains of sweet water in the sea.—TENNYSON.

Likewise, also, this is an Oriental idea.

For this cause, legends say,
So very green to-day,
Those long fields by yon beach, chin-high in grain :
And old men to this hour,
Up-glancing at a shower,
Say, "Blessèd only is the *fallen* rain !"

For goodness, say the wise,
Not in much giving lies.
Gifts, to be good, must bear good fruit as gain.
Blessèd the rain may be,
But not that spent on sea,
When myriads die on land for lack of rain.*

ROBERT CHARLES CALDWELL.

* One final remark may be made : What is the chief verbal peculiarity of Edgar Poe's poem of the "Raven?" Is it not the recurrent rhyme at the close of every stanza, till every repetition of the awful "*nevermore*" shuts each period on the ear, as if a jailor hurled to an iron door on a prisoner, leaving inexorable fate behind? Where did Poe learn this fascination of weird iteration? It was fancifully said of him that his poem of the "Raven" was "good Persian." Did Poe (not bodily but mentally) go further east than Persia? It is a fact that the iteration, after the Oriental mode, of whole lines, as well as words, rhymes, and phrases, is one of the chief characteristics of all Poe's poetry—explain it who can.

On Falling in Love.

Lord, what fools these mortals be!

THERE is only one event in life which really astonishes a man and startles him out of his prepared opinions. Everything else befalls him very much as he expected. Event succeeds to event, with an agreeable variety indeed, but with little that is either startling or intense; they form together no more than a sort of background, or running accompaniment to the man's own reflections; and he falls naturally into a cool, curious, and smiling habit of mind, and builds himself up in a conception of life which expects to-morrow to be after the pattern of to-day and yesterday. He may be accustomed to the vagaries of his friends and acquaintances under the influence of love. He may sometimes look forward to it for himself with an incomprehensible expectation. But it is a subject in which neither intuition nor the behaviour of others will help the philosopher to the truth. There is probably nothing rightly thought or rightly written on this matter of love that is not a piece of the person's experience. I remember an anecdote of a well-known French theorist, who was debating a point eagerly in his *cénacle*. It was objected against him that he had never experienced love. Whereupon he arose, left the society, and made it a point not to return to it until he considered that he had supplied the defect. "Now," he remarked, on entering, "now I am in a position to continue the discussion." Perhaps he had not penetrated very deeply into the subject after all; but the story indicates right thinking, and may serve as an apologue to readers of this essay.

When at last the scales fall from his eyes, it is not without something of the nature of dismay that the man finds himself in such changed conditions. He has to deal with commanding emotions instead of the easy dislikes and preferences in which he has hitherto passed his days; and he recognises capabilities for pain and pleasure of which he had not yet suspected the existence. Falling in love is the one illogical adventure, the one thing of which we are tempted to think as supernatural, in our trite and reasonable world. The effect is out of all proportion with the cause. Two persons, neither of them, it may be, very amiable or very beautiful, meet, speak a little, and look a little into each other's eyes. That has been done a dozen or so of times in the experience of either with no great result. But on this occasion all is different. They

fall at once into that state in which another person becomes to us the very gist and centrepoint of God's creation, and demolishes our laborious theories with a smile ; in which our ideas are so bound up with the one master-thought that even the trivial cares of our own person become so many acts of devotion, and the love of life itself is translated into a wish to remain in the same world with so precious and desirable a fellow-creature. And all the while their acquaintances look on in stupor, and ask each other, with almost passionate emphasis, what so-and-so can see in that woman, or such-an-one in that man ? I am sure, gentlemen, I cannot tell you. For my part, I cannot think what the women mean. It might be very well, if the Apollo Belvedere should suddenly glow all over into life, and step forward from the pedestal with that god-like air of his. But of the misbegotten changelings who call themselves men, and prate intolerably over dinner-tables, I never saw one who seemed worthy to inspire love—no, nor read of any, except Leonardo da Vinci, and perhaps Goethe in his youth. About women I entertain a somewhat different opinion ; but there, I have the misfortune to be a man.

There are many matters in which you may waylay Destiny, and bid him stand and deliver. Hard work, high thinking, adventurous excitement, and a great deal more that forms a part of this or the other person's spiritual bill of fare, are within the reach of almost any one who can dare a little and be patient. But it is by no means in the way of everyone to fall in love. You know the difficulty Shakspeare was put into when Queen Elizabeth asked him to show Falstaff in love. I do not believe that Henry Fielding was ever in love. Scott, if it were not for a passage or two in *Rob Roy*, would give me very much the same effect. These are great names and (what is more to the purpose) strong, healthy, high-strung and generous natures, of whom the reverse might have been expected. As for the innumerable army of anæmic and tailorish persons who occupy the face of this planet with so much propriety, it is palpably absurd to imagine them in any such situation as a love-affair. A wet rag goes safely by the fire ; and if a man is blind, he cannot expect to be much impressed by romantic scenery. Apart from all this, many loveable people miss each other in the world, or meet under some unfavourable star. There is the nice and critical moment of declaration to be got over. From timidity or lack of opportunity a good half of possible love cases never get so far, and at least another quarter do there cease and determine. A very adroit person, to be sure, manages to prepare the way and out with his declaration in the nick of time. And then there is a fine solid sort of man, who goes on from snub to snub ; and if he has to declare forty times, will continue imperturbably declaring, amid the astonished consideration of men and angels, until he has a favourable answer. I dare say, if one were a woman, one would like to marry a man who was capable of doing this, but not quite one who had done so. It is just a little bit abject, and somehow just a little bit gross ; and

marriages in which one of the parties has been thus battered into consent scarcely form agreeable subjects for meditation. Love should run out to meet love with open arms. Indeed, the ideal story is that of two people who go into love step for step, with a fluttered consciousness, like a pair of children venturing together into a dark room. From the first moment when they see each other, with a pang of curiosity, through stage after stage of growing pleasure and embarrassment, they can read the expression of their own trouble in each other's eyes. There is here no declaration properly so called; the feeling is so plainly shared, that as soon as the man knows what it is in his own heart, he is sure of what it is in the woman's.

This simple accident of falling in love is as beneficial as it is astonishing. It arrests the petrifying influence of years, disproves cold-blooded and cynical conclusions, and awakens dormant sensibilities. Hitherto the man had found it a good policy to disbelieve the existence of any enjoyment which was out of his reach; and thus he turned his back upon the strong sunny parts of nature, and accustomed himself to look exclusively on what was common and dull. He accepted a prose ideal, let himself go blind of many sympathies by disuse; and if he were young and witty, or beautiful, wilfully forewent these advantages. He joined himself to the following of what, in the old mythology of love, was prettily called *nonchaloir*; and in an odd mixture of feelings, a fling of self-respect, a preference for selfish liberty, and a great dash of that fear with which good people regard serious interests, kept himself back from the straightforward course of life among certain selected activities. And now, all of a sudden, he is unhorsed, like St. Paul, from his infidel affectation. His heart, which has been ticking accurate seconds for the last year, gives a bound and begins to beat high and irregularly in his breast. It seems as if he had never heard or felt or seen until that moment; and by the report of his memory, he must have lived his past life between sleep and waking, or with the preoccupied attention of a brown study. He is practically incommoded by the generosity of his feelings, smiles much when he is alone, and develops a habit of looking rather blankly upon the moon and stars. But it is not at all within the province of a prose essayist to give a picture of this hyperbolical frame of mind; and the thing has been done already, and that to admiration. In *Adelaide*, in Tennyson's *Maud*, and in some of Heine's songs, you get the absolute expression of this midsummer spirit. Romeo and Juliet were very much in love; although they tell me some German critics are of a different opinion, probably the same who would have us think Mercutio a dull fellow. Poor Antony was in love, and no mistake. That lay figure Marius, in *Les Misérables*, is also a genuine case in his own way, and worth observation. A good many of George Sand's people are thoroughly in love; and so are a good many of George Meredith's. Altogether, there is plenty to read on the subject. If the root of the matter be in him, and if he has the requisite cords to set in

vibration, a young man may occasionally enter, with the key of art, into that land of Beulah which is upon the borders of Heaven and within sight of the City of Love. There let him sit awhile to hatch delightful hopes and perilous illusions.

One thing that accompanies the passion in its first blush is certainly difficult to explain. It comes (I do not quite see how) that from having a very supreme sense of pleasure in all parts of life—in lying down to sleep, in waking, in motion, in breathing, in continuing to be—the lover begins to regard his happiness as beneficial for the rest of the world, and highly meritorious in himself. Our race has never been able contentedly to suppose that the noise of its wars, conducted by a few young gentlemen in a corner of an inconsiderable star, does not re-echo among the courts of Heaven with quite a formidable effect. In much the same taste, when people find a great to-do in their own breasts, they imagine it must have some influence in their neighbourhood. The presence of the two lovers is so enchanting to each other that it seems as if it must be the best thing possible for everybody else. They are half inclined to fancy it is because of them and their love that the sky is blue and the sun shines. And certainly the weather is usually fine while people are courting . . . In point of fact, although the happy man feels very kindly towards others of his own sex, there is apt to be something too much of the magnifico in his demeanour. If people grow presuming and self-important over such matters as a dukedom or the Holy See, they will scarcely support the dizziest elevation in life without some suspicion of a strut; and the dizziest elevation is to love and be loved in return. Consequently, accepted lovers are a trifle condescending in their address to other men. An overweening sense of the passion and importance of life hardly conduces to simplicity of manner. To women, they feel very nobly, very purely, and very generously, as if they were so many Joan of Arcs; but this does not come out in their behaviour; and they treat them to Grandisonian airs marked with a suspicion of fatuity. I am not quite certain that women do not like this sort of thing; but really, after having bemused myself over *Daniel Deronda*, I have given up trying to understand what they like.

If it did nothing else, this sublime and ridiculous superstition, that the pleasure of the pair is somehow blessed to others, and everybody is made happier in their happiness, would serve at least to keep love generous and great-hearted. Nor is it quite a baseless superstition after all. Other lovers are hugely interested. They strike the nicest balance between pity and approval, when they see people aping the greatness of their own sentiments. It is an understood thing in the play, that while the young gentlefolk are courting on the terrace, a rough flirtation is being carried on, and a light, trivial sort of love is growing up, between the footman and the singing chambermaid. As people are generally cast for the leading parts in their own imaginations, the reader can apply the parallel to real life without much chance of going wrong. In short, they

are quite sure this other love-affair is not so deep-seated as their own, but they like dearly to see it going forward. And love, considered as a spectacle, must have attractions for many who are not of the confraternity. The sentimental old maid is a common-place of the novelists; and he must be rather a poor sort of human being, to be sure, who can look on at this pretty madness without indulgence and sympathy. For nature commends itself to people with a most insinuating art; the busiest is now and again arrested by a great sunset; and you may be as pacific or as cold-blooded as you will, but you cannot help some emotion when you read of well-disputed battles, or meet a pair of lovers in the lane.

Certainly, whatever it may be with regard to the world at large, this idea of beneficent pleasure is true as between the sweethearts. To do good and communicate is the lover's grand intention. It is the happiness of the other that makes his own most intense gratification. It is not possible to disentangle the different emotions, the pride, humility, pity and passion, which are excited by a look of happy love or an unexpected caress. To make oneself beautiful, to dress the hair, to excel in talk, to do anything and all things that puff out the character and attributes and make them imposing in the eyes of others, is not only to magnify one's self, but to offer the most delicate homage at the same time. And it is in this latter intention that they are done by lovers; for the essence of love is kindness; and indeed it may be best defined as passionate kindness: kindness, so to speak, run mad and become importunate and violent. Vanity in a merely personal sense exists no longer. The lover takes a perilous pleasure in privately displaying his weak points and having them, one after another, accepted and condoned. He wishes to be assured that he is not loved for this or that good quality, but for himself, or something as like himself as he can contrive to set forward. For, although it may have been a very difficult thing to paint the marriage of Cana, or write the fourth act of Antony and Cleopatra, there is a more difficult piece of art before every one in this world who cares to set about explaining his own character to others. Words and acts are easily wrenched from their true significance; and they are all the language we have to come and go upon. A pitiful job we make of it, as a rule. For better or worse, people mistake our meaning and take our emotions at a wrong valuation. And generally we rest pretty content with our failures; we are content to be misapprehended by cackling flirts; but when once a man is moonstruck with this affection of love, he makes it a point of honour to clear such dubieties away. He cannot have the best of her sex misled upon a point of this importance; and his pride revolts at being loved in a mistake.

He discovers a great reluctance to return on former periods of his life. To all that has not been shared with her, rights and duties, bygone fortunes and dispositions, he can look back only by a difficult and repugnant effort of the will. That he should have wasted some years in ignorance of what alone was really important, that he may have enter-

tained the thought of other women with any show of complacency, is a burthen almost too heavy for his self-respect. But it is the thought of another past that rankles in his spirit like a poisoned wound. That he himself made a fashion of being alive in the bald, beggarly days before a certain meeting, is deplorable enough in all good conscience. But that She should have permitted herself the same liberty seems inconsistent with a Divine providence.

A great many people run down jealousy, on the score that it is an artificial feeling, as well as practically inconvenient. This is scarcely fair; for the feeling on which it merely attends, like an ill-humoured courtier, is itself artificial in exactly the same sense and to the same degree. I suppose what is meant by that objection is that jealousy has not always been a character of man, formed no part of that very modest kit of sentiments with which he is supposed to have begun the world, but waited to make its appearance in better days and among richer natures. And this is equally true of love, and friendship, and love of country, and delight in what they call the beauties of nature, and most other things worth having. Love, in particular, will not endure any historical scrutiny: to all who have fallen across it, it is one of the most incontestable facts in the world; but if you begin to ask what it was in other periods and countries, in Greece for instance, the strangest doubts begin to spring up, and everything seems so vague and changing that a dream is logical in comparison. Jealousy, at any rate, is one of the consequences of love; you may like it or not, at pleasure; but there it is.

It is not exactly jealousy, however, that we feel when we reflect on the past of those we love. A bundle of letters found after years of happy union creates no sense of insecurity in the present; and yet it will pain a man sharply. The two people entertain no vulgar doubt of each other: but this pre-existence of both occurs to the mind as something indelicate. To be altogether right, they should have had twin birth together, at the same moment with the feeling that unites them. Then indeed it would be simple and perfect and without reserve or afterthought. Then they would understand each other with a fulness impossible otherwise. There would be no barrier between them of associations that cannot be imparted. They would be led into none of those comparisons that send the blood back to the heart. And they would know that there had been no time lost, and they had been together as much as was possible. For besides terror for the separation that must follow some time or other in the future, men feel anger, and something like remorse, when they think of that other separation which endured until they met. Some one has written that love makes people believe in immortality, because there seems not to be room enough in life for so great a tenderness, and it is inconceivable that the most masterful of our emotions should have no more than the spare moments of a few years. Indeed, it seems strange; but if we call to mind analogies, we can hardly regard it as impossible.

"The blind bow-boy," who smiles upon us from the end of terraces in old Dutch gardens, laughingly hails his bird-bolts among a fleeting generation. But for as fast as ever he shoots, the game dissolves and disappears into eternity from under his falling arrows; this one is gone ere he is struck; the other has but time to make one gesture and give one passionate cry; and they are all the things of a moment. When the generation is gone, when the play is over, when the thirty years' panorama has been withdrawn in tatters from the stage of the world, we may ask what has become of these great, weighty, and undying loves, and the sweethearts who despised mortal conditions in a fine credulity; and they can only show us a few songs in a bygone taste, a few actions worth remembering, and a few children who have retained some happy stamp from the disposition of their parents.

R. L. S.

Bulgarian Popular Songs.

THAT "verse sweetens toil, however rude the sound," is a fact well known to all Slavonic peoples, and so, wherever Slavs are to be seen, there is song to be heard. The *rondes*, danced by young men and maidens, who hold hands in a circle, and keep time to the music of their own voices, still survive in some parts of France. In England they have passed entirely into the domain of children, who love to circle to the sound of such ditties as that which tells how poor Mary Brown went to see her sweetheart go through the town. But in the East of Europe they play a prominent part among the diversions of the common people, under names signifying "a wheel," or "a chorus," the latter being borrowed from the Greeks, to whom such circling dances are dear. M. Dozon, who has done so much to popularise the study of Bulgarian poetry,* draws many a pleasant picture of popular gatherings thus enlivened with dance and song. He quotes from the preface to the collection of *Bulgarian Popular Songs*,† published in 1861 by the ill-fated brothers Miladinof, the account of how the maidens of Strouga are accustomed to meet on great Church festivals in a garden outside the town, and there to unite in a long *khoro* or "brawl," which is led successively by one girl after another, till each has had her turn; and how at Panagurishche each quarter of the town has on holy days its own *khoro*, but an hour before sunset they break up, and the girls composing them take their pitchers and pans to a fountain, near which is a spot fitted for maidens' feet, and there they recommence their circling dance and song. And then he proceeds to mention an experience of his own.

One summer evening, he says, while traversing the defile which separates the chain of the Hæmus from that of Rhodope, he came to a small roadside hamlet. It was harvest time, and troops of women were descending from the province of Sophia to seek for field-labour in Thrace. One of these bands, almost entirely composed of young girls, draped in costumes as strange as those of Red Indians, was dancing to the sound of song on the dusty high road, by way of relaxation after the day's long march. And the next morning, at daybreak, they were found engaged in the same amusement. Near Philippopolis, also, he tells us, during the

* See his excellent *Chants Populaires Bulgares*, 1875, from which the songs translated in the present article have been taken. He gives the Bulgarian texts, with a very literal and faithful French translation.

† "Bulgarski narodni pesni, sobrani od bratija Miladinovci." Zagreb (Agram) 1861. 8vo.

rice-harvest, the labourers entertain themselves after the same fashion. During the day song lightens the rice-cutter's unhealthy toil, and as soon as the sun has set, the men and women come from the fields and commence a festival which lasts late into the night. With this "untiring lightheartedness" of these poor Bulgarians, M. Dozon compares the "allure morne" of the French agricultural labourers. And all the more striking is the mirth of the Slavs, he adds, because Slav music has the reputation of being melancholy or even sad. And the words of Slav dance-songs are often of a decidedly sad nature; but the girls who sing them do not always pay much attention to their meaning. Here is a song, however, which probably does come home to their hearts, for it deals with subjects ever dear to the female mind—dress and ornaments, and their effect upon a rival:—

"Says Marko to Dafina: 'I'm going to put thee away, my dear; for thou art no longer as pretty as thou wert the first year, or the second either.'

"Says Dafina to Marko: 'My dear, dear Marko! Don't put me away, dear; for it was always hateful to me to meet a widow by the way, a widow put away by her husband. But take, my dear, the pretty Todora, that she may help me in my household work. Heavy for me is the household work. Five times a day to bake, unleavened bread to bake. I cannot, dear, suffice to wash thy clothes. Or if, dear, I can wash them, I cannot mend them. Or if, dear, I mend them, I cannot wash myself. Or if, dear, I wash myself, I cannot braid my hair.'

"Marko deserts Dafina, goes away to take Todora to wife. Dafina goes into the garden, and there bitterly, tenderly weeps. 'O my dear treasures! By whom have ye been planted, and by whom will ye now be transplanted!'

"Says her mother-in-law to Dafina: 'Damsel, Dafina, my daughter-in-law! Do not sit there weeping, my daughter. Wash thyself, that I may braid thy hair, and that I may arrange thy tresses, with coins of gold in the braided tresses. And don a weighty braid of alien hair, and put on bracelets up to thy elbows, and handsomely dress thyself, daughter-in-law; dress thyself and also adorn thyself with cloth and with silk, with silver and with gold. Then go into the cellar and draw rosy wine, and fill with it a yellow bowl, and go forth to meet Marko's bridal train.'

"Dafina listened to her mother-in-law, washed her face, had her tresses braided, and golden coins set among the braids, and with both cloth and silk attired herself handsomely. Then she went out and met the bridal party.

"When Marko and the bride drew near, as soon as Todora saw her, thus spake she to the assistants at the wedding:

"O ye gossips and old witnesses, and ye nine bridegroom's men! Excuse my neglecting much ceremoniousness and omitting frequent salutations. There is something I want to ask you about. Is this Marko's

wife? She who is so beautiful; is it she whom Marko put away? How can he tako me for his wife? Come along, take me back again home.'"

Elaborate descriptions of female beauty do not find a place in these songs, and M. Dozon remarks that the village maidens of Bulgaria are not particularly attractive, at least to a stranger's eye; in fact, that to any one who sees them engaged in some of their avocations "the idea of coquetry is the last which would suggest itself, were it not that the roses and lilies or artificial flowers which adorn their heads prove that they too are daughters of Eve." Cosmetics and false hair are as dear to them, it seems, as to ladies of fashion, and hair-dye is indispensable to their happiness, though it is more especially in Servia that black hair is considered necessary by every woman who respects herself, from her seventh year up to her dying hour. But whatever may be the supply of female beauty, there is probably no lack of admiration for it in Bulgaria, though the songs do not freely express it. Here is a specimen of one which attempts something in that direction, but the compliments are of a purely conventional kind:—

"Maiden mine, my little sister! Silly little one that thou art! Look not either up or down, but look thy brother dear in the eyes. Thy brother dear is going to write thee down, with Adrianople ink, on white Turkish paper. To mother will I send thee, so that mother and father may see into what sort of love I, here among strangers, have fallen.

"Nowhere in the world is there any one to equal her!

"Like to a poplar slight is her figure; her face is as fair as new cheese. Her eyes are black cherries, her eyebrows thin laces. Her mouth is a cup of silver; a sugar store is her tongue."

The sorrows of parted lovers, or the agony of unrequited love, form the themes of many of the songs. In one a young Turk, strangely enough, is the hero. But the story is altogether a strange one. The beautiful young Neda, while drinking water from a well, has swallowed a two-headed snake. It makes its nest under her skin, and passes the winter in her heart and the summer in her throat. On her bed lies Neda, ill nigh unto death. Little consolation do her brothers or her mother give her. Neda prays to God that He may not forget her. Then stands a young Turk by her bedside, offering assistance. A glass of wine, or two glasses of raki, might do her good, he thinks. But all that she cares to have is fruit from Nicopol:—

"A week's journey off lies that place. In a single day rides the young Turk thither—rides thither and returns. Just as the young Turk reaches the outskirts of the village, the fair Neda is in the middle of the village. The young Turk stops—stops and listens. Wherefore wail the brothers of Neda? why rise the fumes of white incense? The

young Turk understands that the fair Neda is dead, and on he goes to the middle of the village. Then aloud cries the young Turk :

" 'Ho there! ye brothers of Neda. Here are two hundreds; lay her down! Here are three; let her be unshrouded; that I may see if she is still fair, fair as she was wont to be.'

"They laid her down; they unshrouded her. Neither two nor three hundreds did he give. But he drew a sharp knife and drove it into his poor heart. In the middle of the village was buried the fair Neda, and in the outskirts of the village the young Turk."

It is not often that the Turk is so well spoken of in the songs. As a general rule he is looked upon as a hater rather than a lover. The following little idyl, for instance, ends with an expression of the popular feeling on the subject:—

"There have gone out, there have set out, five daughters-in-law, the wives of five brothers, to cut the yellow millet.

"When they came to the harvest-field, thus spake the eldest of the sisters-in-law :

" 'Come, let us lie down and sleep awhile, until the sun grows hot, and the dew has fled away.' "

"When they awake from their slumber, the old father-in-law is driving up, bringing the waggon for the sheaves. Trouble comes upon all of them.

" 'What reply shall we make to him?' they cry.

"Answers the eldest of the daughters-in-law :—

" 'Remain silent, all of you. It is I who will make reply.'

"So soon as the old father-in-law arrived, thus did the eldest daughter-in-law address him :

" 'O thou father-in-law ! O ass worn with long labour ! Why hast thou grown corn beside the highway ? All the day have we been running, flying from the Turks, the Janissaries, who keep passing along the highway.' "

Allusions to the Turk are, however, less numerous than might be expected. The hero of one song asks the forest why it has so early withered, whether it is fire or frost that has destroyed its verdure. And the forest answers softly :—

"If I have withered before my time, it is not because frost has numbed me or fire scorched me. But there has passed by a swarthy Moor, driving forwards three chains of slaves. The first chain of young lads, the second chain of young girls, the third chain of young wives. Among the lads is thy youngest brother; he goes in front, leading the

* M. Dozon here translates as follows: "jusqu'à ce que la chaleur soit passée, et que la rosée tombe." But the verb *uleti* signifies to fly away, to disappear. In No. 51 an angry father, cursing his daughter, wishes that her back-hair may *uleti* or vanish "like the dew in the meadows."

first chain. Among the girls is thy sister dear; she goes in front, leads the second chain. Among the wives is thy first love; she goes in front, the third chain leads."

In another of the songs, a dance song, "a Turk drives before him a poor woman whom he has taken captive, cruelly drives her on through the cruel frost, beating her with blows on her pale face," and orders her to fling away the babe she carries in her arms:—

"How can I throw away my baby boy? O thou Turk, thou of another faith!" she replies, "I who am the daughter-in-law of a priest, a priest's daughter-in-law, a deacon's wife?" But when the Turk sits down to eat his dinner, the captive takes her babe up the hill, makes a swing cradle of wild clematis, and hangs it up between two fir-trees. Then, swinging her babe to and fro, and hushing it to sleep, she mournfully sings over it this lullaby:—

"Nanni, nanni! my baby boy. Thy mother must the Old Mountain be, and the two fir-trees thy sisters dear. When the wind blows it will rock thy cradle. When the rain falls thou shalt be bathed. A doe will come by, and it will suckle thee."

It is not always the Turk, however, of whom the Bulgarian wife or mother has to complain. In more than one of the songs we hear of a husband who ill-treats his spouse. Here, by way of example, is a rustic scene, which is not in the least idyllic:—

"Where hast thou been, Dena, since the early morn? Thy baby boy has been crying in his cradle, and on the hedge has thy white linen gown sunburnt."

"May the Lord punish that mother of mine who did not give me to him I wanted, but gave me to an unreasonable lout. When he goes afield in the morning he puts no bread in his wallet. But he makes me cook for him, cook for him a hot dinner, and carry it out to him afield. And when I have carried him his hot dinner, he unharnesses one of his oxen, harnesses me instead, and makes me plough, makes me plough till the hour of evening prayer, using as his goad a branch of thorn. And afterwards he sends me home that I may get ready for him a good supper."

Still more unromantic is the house-father of another cheerful song. In it we are told how Todor's house caught fire, and the question arose in his mind as to what he should save from the flames; whether the salvage should consist of "his black steed with its golden saddle," or "his young wife and little children." Then in a whisper did his mother advise him to save the horse, for he could easily get a fresh wife and new children, but a horse to his liking would he find it hard to get. So Todor saved his steed, and the flames swept around his wife and children. And this is how the story ends:—

"The children cry, their mother soothes them, bathing their burns with her warm tears, and at last, thus addressing them with heroic heart :

" 'Burn, my little ones, burn, dear hearts ! Ye will become white ashes, and I, your mother, a crimson coal ; so that your grandmother may gaze at me, may gaze at me, and be glad at heart ! "

But perhaps this is not meant to be taken literally, any more than the moral song which represents the young Dragana as confessing to a singular amount of arson. Nine stables has she burnt, nine outhouses containing sheep and shepherds, and nine churches. On her the bishop lays a heavy penance. "As thou hast burnt them, damsel Dragana, so do thou now burn thyself." Away went Dragana to a retired spot, there piled up a great pyre, lighted it, made the sign of the Cross, and flung herself into the flames, in order to fulfil her penance. "There she died, but her body remained unconsumed." For the narration of crimes and other horrors Bulgarian minstrels seem to have a pronounced taste. In one song a young wife and mother, before starting on Sunday morning for church, asks Marika, her husband's sister, to look after her baby for her, and to do the household work. Marika does so, and, among other things, "washes clean a blood-stained knife." The mother returns from church, and asks if her babe has cried. "The babe has not cried," replies Marika, "nor have I been into its room." The mother enters into her child's room. There it lies with its throat cut. The mother shrieks aloud, and accuses her sister-in-law of the murder. The head of the family resorts to ordeal by fire, in order to find out which of the sisters-in-law is guilty.

" 'Come, let us go for wood,' says Nicholas to Marika.

"They went forth to get wood. Nicholas cut down wood, and made of it two great fires. Into the one he flung Marika, and into the other he flung his wife. Where Marika was burnt there rose up a white church. From the fire in which the wife was burnt there flowed black blood."

Of a pleasanter nature than these tales of horror, which no doubt exercise a fascination over the popular mind analogous to that of which our own "penny dreadfuls" can boast, are the records of faithful lovers or spouses. One of the most graceful of the songs is the following, which is founded on a popular tale known all over Europe and Asia ; the romantic idea of mutually attracted trees growing out of the graves of lovers parted by death being as familiar to the nomads of South Siberia as it is to the admirers of "Lord Lovel" in our own islands :—

"Two young people have loved each other from their infancy till they were grown up. The time comes for them to get married. As for the girl, her mother will not give her to the lad. As for the lad, his father wants him to marry another.

"Says the lad to the girl :

"O thou maiden, little maiden, canst thou consent that I should take, that I should take another love?

"Come, let us go into the lonely forest, the lonely forest of Tililei; where no bird flutters, neither flutters nor sings.

"There will I become a green plane-tree, and thou beside me shalt be a slender pine.

"Thither will come the woodcutters, woodcutters with curved axes.

"And they will fell the green plane-tree, and the plane-tree's neighbour, the slender pine, and they will cut them into white boards.

"They will turn the wood into bedsteads, and they will place us one beside the other. Then once more, my love, shall we be united."

In one song, the leading idea of which is familiar to most Slav peoples, the fair young Dafina, while washing linen one day, falls into the Danube, and is in danger of drowning. Her mother calls to her to swim ashore. But Dafina's hair has caught in the roots of a willow, and she cannot move. Her father is appealed to, but he has not courage enough to attempt her rescue. "But as soon as Nicholas heard her voice he flung himself into the Danube with his clothes on. Her dearly beloved one got Dafina out alive." In the following song, however, the dearly beloved one seems to be not quite so ready to listen to the voice of the charmer:—

"A small pearl-like rain is falling. My love is saddling his steed to go in search of gain into Wallachia. Him I entreat, saying to him:

"Remain, my love, this year, this year and this winter. Money, my love, may always be got. But youth, my love, comes only once into the world. Youth, my love, is like the dew. With the dawn it is here. By the full daylight it can be seen no more."

Such scenes as this are common, it seems, as well in Bulgaria as in Epirus and Albania, whence the betrothed or married men are accustomed to migrate to other provinces, leaving behind them Penelopes who have to await them many weary years. Not long ago a wife was buried at Yannina, who had for thirty years remained faithful to a husband absent in Wallachia. M. Dozon's baker, at the same place, although a very young man, devotes only one week in the year to his wife, who lives at a village distant about eight or ten leagues. During Easter week he shuts his shop, and pays his annual visit to his spouse, who occupies during the rest of the year the position known in India as that of a "grass widow." The terrible fate of a deserted wife, who did not show what her husband considered sufficient perseverance in awaiting his return, is narrated in one of the most ghastly of the brigand songs. The wife of Koyo, a brigand captain, who has been absent nine years, is forced by her brother to marry again. After the wedding Koyo returns, and slays his successor. Then he covers his wife with tar, and sets her alight. Three days do he and his troop feast and drink, "while Stana

burns to give them light." In the following song a faithful wife herself sportively suggests a separation :—

HE.

"Never since we fell in love with each other, O slender Yana, never since have we gained good gains; never since have black steeds proved lasting; never since has the blue dove cooed, or the clear-voiced nightingale sung. Is it that thou, O slender Yana, art of thyself unfortunate, or dost thou lie, O slender Yana, under a curse?"

SHE.

"If it be, O my first love, that I am unfortunate; or if I lie, O my first love, under a curse. Then hire a gilded carriage, and carry me to the market-placé of Nicopolis. And there hire two public criers, and let them cry aloud in the public streets: 'Yana the fair, the graceful, is to be sold; is to be sold for twelve purses of silver.' Then take the money, O my first love; take it and place it within thy girdle. In order that thou mayst see, and become assured, whether money, my love, will come out to meet thee; or whether money will speak to thee, my love; or whether money will throw its arms around thee, my love."

Sometimes the songs tell of a youth who does not keep his promise to a maiden. Three times, in one of them, does a girl say "Good evening!" to her first love, whom she finds beside the fountain. But he behaves as though he heard her not. At last, "Farewell, O my dark eyes!" she says. "I go from thee, and thou goest from me. Never again shall we look upon each other, never again speak one with another. But we will go and be judged, be judged by the bishop. And if they will not pronounce judgment there, we will leave the matter to be settled in the other world. There will justice be done, there shall we two be married." Another piece, of which the theme is the same, is of a less serious tone. The young Neda is invited to a gathering of the "Husking-Bee" type. But she replies that she is ashamed to show herself, seeing that her first love, Nicholas, has thrown her over and is going to marry another girl. "Dear is Nicholas to me," she cries. "Five whole years did we love one another. Dear to me, sister-in-law, is Nicholas. How can I go to the gathering! All the girls there would laugh at me, saying, 'They loved, but they did not marry!'" But her sister-in-law will not listen to her excuses, will not allow her to fret. Neda, she says, must wash her face, and braid her tresses, don her best attire, throw over her head a white kerchief, and adorn her hair with flowers of divers hues. Then carrying a painted spinning-wheel, with a new spindle and a hank of white yarn, Neda must take her place among the other girls, "like the moon amidst the stars." And then Neda must talk and sing, says the sister-in-law. "For although you may have been very fond of each other yet Nicholas is not the only man in the world."

Sometimes it is the fair maiden who is false, and the good youth who suffers. Thus we have Ivantcho reminding Penka that when the cherries were ripe, and he and she were gathering them, setting their feet on the same branch and filling the same basket with fruit, they had agreed to marry each other, calling down a curse of illness on whichever of them twain should break the pledge. But Penka only laughs at him, and bids him begone. So Ivantcho goes away and weeps bitterly. But presently illness comes upon Penka, and after a time she thinks she is about to die, so she sends for the lover she has forsaken. He comes, and she says to him: "Give me thy hand, dear, and forgive me! Long enough have I lain here ill." He gives her his hand. She kisses it; and that very instant her illness leaves her. The heroine of the following little drama might have pleaded a sufficient reason, if she had liked, for preferring a second to a first love:—

PENTCHO.

"It repents me, Stanka, that I ever fell in love with thee, for thou art the daughter of poor people. Thy father makes spindles, and thy mother sells them in the village for flour fine."

STANKA.

"Well is it, O Pentcho the wealthy! that thou hast spoken to me these words. Since thou hast repented, go away and choose one who has means, and marry her."

"Thereupon Pentcho went away. But match-makers came to view Stanka, and Stanka was promised in marriage. Pentcho's mother was invited to the betrothal. To it went his father and his mother, and they took with them a measure of flour and a copper vessel full of wine. Sorrow came upon Pentcho. He went to ask for pardon, and thus to Stanka he spake:—

"O Stanka, dearly beloved one! I was only jesting; it seems you thought I was in earnest."

"But Stanka replied to him: 'With girls should there be no jesting.'"

"Sorrow came upon Pentcho. No one had he to console him. Back did he return, and he went out into the garden, and stood beneath a St. Peter's-day apple tree. Unloosing his crimson girdle, he fastened it to the apple tree, and therewith did Pentcho hang himself.

"No one saw Pentcho do it. Only Stanka dear saw it. Up to him came Stanka running, cut the girdle with a knife, and thus to Pentcho spoke: 'Whatever are you doing, Pentcho?'

"When his mother heard of what she had done, his mother and his father too, they went back to the betrothal, and they made her Pentcho's bride."

The literal translation of the words rendered "he went to ask for pardon" is, "he went to the little *proshka*." On the first Tuesday after

a marriage, a Bulgarian bride pays a visit, called "the little *proshka*," to her parents, and on the ensuing Sunday she pays another visit, called "the great *proshka*." The idea is that she goes to ask pardon for all the faults of her youth, so far as her parents are concerned, and the name comes from a root meaning "to ask;" whence come also *prositei*, a petitioner, *proshchenie*, pardon, and the ordinary equivalent for "Good-bye!" *proshchavajte!* (in Russian *proshchajte!*) meaning "Grant me pardon." The match-makers who come to see Stanka are the women called in Bulgaria *oglednitsi*, "lookers-at," from *gled*, a look. In all Slavonic lands it is customary for a marriage thus to be arranged by agents who go between the parents of the bridegroom and those of the bride. In one of the songs the lover asks his mother to go to Donka's house, and there to ask her hand for him. If her parents consent, the mother can stay awhile with them. But if they refuse, then let her come home quickly. For he will in that case go straight away to Mount Athos. Thence he will one day return as a priest, and he will listen to the confession of all the women of the village. Amongst them will come the young wife Donka, and to her he will say:—

"Speak, O Donka! tell how thou hast sinned; how thou hast sinned in the years of thy youth; in the years of thy youth, towards thy first love."

There are two classes of song to which M. Dozon has devoted a considerable portion of his book, those which he styles mythological, and those which narrate the exploits of brigands. The mythological songs chiefly deal with snakes, either of that many-headed kind which plays so important a part in all Slavonic popular fiction, or of the family of dragons, to which belong the Modern-Greek *Drakos* and *Drakana*; also with Samodivas, the savage forest or hill-maidens, who play in Bulgaria the part played in Servia by *Vilas*, in South Russia by *Rusalkas*, in modern Greece by the malicious demi-goddesses who have succeeded to the name of the Hellenic *Nereids*. In one of these songs, a girl is chosen by "three maidens, three Samodivas" (who answer here to the Fates) to be "the Samodiva *popadya* or priestess." Whereupon "she separates herself from her soul," or gives up the ghost. In another poem a Samodiva appears who is of the well-known "Swanmaiden" type. A youth steals her clothes, and so she has to marry him. And she makes him a good wife, till one day she recovers her clothes. Then she flies up the chimney, sits on the roof, whistles in Samodiva fashion, utters a mocking farewell to her husband, and disappears. On one occasion we listen to the sorrows of a youth who is grievously annoyed by the affection of a female snake, which appears under the form of a bear, and persists in calling him her love. Fortunately for his peace of mind, he extracts from her the prescription for a lotion which renders hateful the person to whom it is applied. He applies it to himself, and the over-affectionate bear flies from him in disgust. On another we hear a childless mother addressing to the Morning

Star a request that it will bear to heaven her prayer for a child. In one of the pieces common to Servia and Bulgaria, we are told how the Lord resolved to build a church, and summoned to the building the swiftest of "the Vilas, the Whirlwinds, and the Samodivas." And the swiftest was the *Chuma* or Plague, who took her bow and arrows, and built the church with the men and women whom she slew therewith. In another we see the beautiful Grozdanka shot up into the air from a swing, and carried into the skies, there to become the bride of the bright Sun. Very attractive to the comparative mythologist (still more so to the superlative mythologist, to whom, judging from his hasty conclusions, comparisons often seem to be odious) are these records of old Bulgarian belief. But it is well known that a scalded rat dreads even cold water. After making acquaintance with Mr. Verkovitch's *Véda Slave*,* we are afraid of accepting any Bulgarian myths until their authenticity has been placed beyond suspicion. And, therefore, we will not dwell any longer upon the mythological side of Bulgaria's popular poetry.

The songs about the Bulgarian Haidout, the brigand known in Servia by the name of Haidouk, are preserved from being dull merely by the fascination which always attends a record of horrors. In one of them a girl becomes the chief of a band of brigands, surpassing them all in feats of strength and dexterity. In another a young robber feigns love for a Turkish lady, and then treacherously puts her to death. In a third a village maiden is carried off to the brigands' home among the peaks of the Old Mountain, and is there murdered by one of their party, to whom she had not, he says, paid sufficient attention when he, then a labourer on her father's farm, fell ill. The solitary good point about the Haidout is the courage with which he meets death, making it a point of honour, when his enemies put an end to him, to die defiant and well drest. Thus when the brigand Stoian has been caught, and taken to the priest's house, with his "white hands fastened with black cords," he begs that the youngest of the priest's daughters will do him a favour. "As they are going to hang me," he says to Gyula, the priest's daughter-in-law, "ask her to wash my shirt for me, and to unloose my knotted hair. For I love to see, Gyula, when a gallant youth is hanged, that the shirt he has on is a clean one, and that his hair floats to and fro."

Of actual history there is little or nothing in the modern Bulgarian songs. But vague echoes of a historic past may at times be heard in some of them, which may be due to Servian influences. Of such a nature is the poem which tells us how an official of the olden time named Dan

* *Véda Slovena*, &c. *Le Véda Slave*. Chants populaires des Bulgares de Thrace et de Macédoine, de l'époque préhistorique et préchrétienne, découverts et édites par Etienne J. Verkovitch. Vol. I. Belgrade, 1874. It is supposed that Mr. Verkovitch acted in good faith, but that he was imposed upon by some local collector, who, like the native contributors to M. Jacolliot's *La Bible dans l'Inde*, found whatever an employer wanted.

drank wine with certain villagers for three whole months. At the end of that time they said to him, "Here have we been drinking ruddy wine, without thinking of God. Come let us build churches all of silver and of gold." But he replied :

"It is not fit that we should build churches all of silver and of gold. For our rule draws to an end ; the Turkish rule is close at hand. The churches will be overthrown, of the silver will saddles be made, and horses' bits of the gold. But let us build churches of marble and of white stone, of white lime and yellow earth."

And the villagers took his advice, and built their churches of less tempting materials. A more defiant spirit breathes in another song, in which "the Moscow Queen, the Moscow widow" (probably Catherine II.), exclaims : "I fear no man living, neither Tsar nor Vizier, but I do fear God the Highest." When the Tsar (*i.e.* the Sultan) and the Vizier hear this, they send out seven-and-seventy Pashas to fight her. The Moscow Queen begs that they will grant an armistice, in order that she may "braid her locks and gather together an army." As they will not consent, she waxes wroth, mounts on horseback with her hair hanging over her shoulders, and, after a battle lasting three days and three nights, slaughters the Pashas, and sends their heads to the Sultan, saying :

"If the Sultan has, the Sultan and the Vizier, another seventy of them, another seventy and seven, let them be sent out here that I may come to terms with them."

There are, it is true, a number of fragments of what some writers call a Bulgarian epos, but they appear again to be merely echoes of the Servian. In olden days, no doubt, historical Bulgarian poems were current among the people, or at least the minstrels of the people, but they have died away during the long period of national servitude. As to "New-Bulgarian poetry," it is of too recent a date to have sunk into the hearts and thence risen to the lips of the common people. Some day perhaps the songs of Rakovsky, Slaveikof, Karavelof, Zhinzifof, Tchintalof, and other modern poets may be heard whenever the young men and maidens of Bulgaria are gathered together. But at present, though their productions are highly popular in the ordinary sense of the word, they have not become domiciled in the memory of the people. Therefore we will not quote any of them here.* Rather will we select, by way of conclusion, two genuine folk-songs, the one of which is rendered attractive by its sportive tone, the other by a romantic grace which is not always the characteristic of Bulgarian popular poetry. The first belongs to a class of which Vuk Karadjich has given several Servian specimens in his excellent collection :—

* Several specimens will be found, in a Russian garb, in the section devoted to Bulgaria, of Gerbel's excellent work (in Russian) entitled *Poeziya Slavyan* [Poetry of the Slavs]. St. Petersburg, 1871. Imp. 8vo.

"The Gnat and the Fly fell out. If there had only been anything like a reason for it! But it was just for a little female fly. The Gnat was awfully savage, unsheathed its keen sting, and pierced the Fly to the heart. The blood streamed, poured forth in floods over the highways of Constantinople. The caravans could not get along, much less could the folk who went afoot cross the fords.

"The Flies held a meeting, and appointed Cadis. The Wasps were made Constables, and the Bees Sergeants, and the Bumble-bees Criers.

"The Criers gave notice in the village, that young and old should hasten and remove the corpse from the road. The Constables gave chase to the Gnat. The Gnat took to flight, and thus prayed to God:

"O God, Lord Most High! Grant that a fine rain may wet the wings of the Flies; that a cold wind may blow and scatter abroad the Wasps.

"The Lord listened to the Gnat. A cold wind began to blow, a fine rain fell like dew. The Gnat flew far away to Mount Irim Pirim, and there pitched tents. The tents were mushrooms. When the rain was over the Gnat came forth, and wrote this firman on a beech-tree leaf: 'To the place he came from let everyone return.'"

The theme of the second song is that voice of the nightingale of which so much is said in the poetry of all Slav peoples:—

"I passed by a hill, I passed by a second. On a third were three nightingales. The hill rocked as they sang. I was astonished, and I hesitated as to how to capture the three nightingales. Then I felt in my breast and took out a thin net, and netted the three hills, and caught the three nightingales, and placed them in a cage.

"I hung them up beside the window. And the first sings and lulls me to sleep. And the second sings and rouses me from sleep. And the third flutters its wings and cries:

"'Up, up, O young man! What a beauty is passing along the road! Her lips can allure birds. Her voice might draw down the stars.'"

W. R. S. R.

Carità.

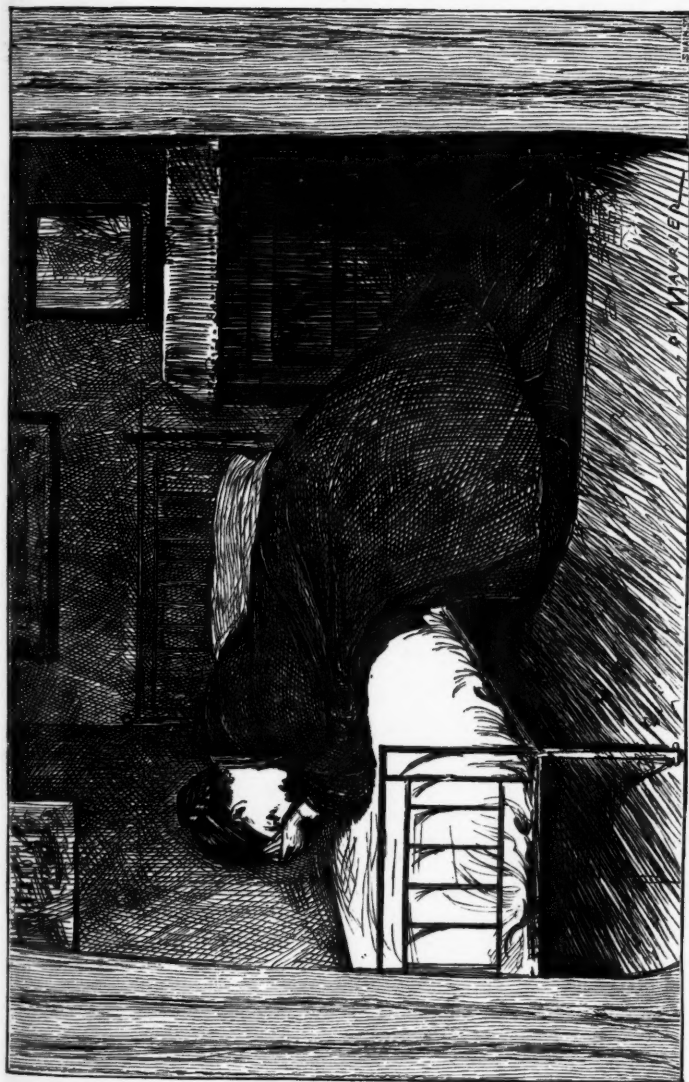
CHAPTER XXV.

AN IDEALIST.



HEN Agnes Burchell encountered Oswald Meredith, as has been recorded, she had but recently taken up her abode at the "House." She had gone there much against the will of her family, actuated by that discontent which many generations may have felt, but only the present generation has confessed and justified. Agnes was the eldest daughter of a very prosaic pair, born in a very prosaic household, and how it was that the ideal had caught her in its tenacious grip nobody knew. In the Rectory at the foot of the hill, noisy with children, greasy with bread and butter, between a fat father who prosed and a stout mother who grumbled, the girl had set her heart, from the very beginning of conscious sentiment in her, upon some more excellent way. How this was to

be reached she had not been able to divine for years, and many pious struggles had poor Agnes against her own better desires, many attempts to subdue herself and to represent to herself that the things she had to do were her duty and the best things for her. Between exhortations to the service of God in its most spiritual sense, and exhortations to be contented "in that condition of life to which God had called her," her heart was rent and her life distracted. Was there, indeed, nothing better in the world than to cut the bread and butter like Werther's Charlotte, to darn the stockings, to listen to parish gossip and her mother's standing grievance, which was that Cherry Beresford, an old maid, should be well off and drive about in her carriage, while she, the Rector's wife, went painfully afoot—and her father's twaddle about the plague of Dissenters and the wickedness of curates? Agnes tried very hard to accommodate herself to these circumstances of her lot. She tried to change the tone of the family talk, making herself extremely disagreeable to everybody in so



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doing. She tried to reduce the children to obedience and to bring order into the unruly house, and in so doing got herself soundly rated by everybody. Who was she that she should take upon her to be superior to her neighbours—to set them all right? The rest of the Burchells were very comfortable in their state of hugger-mugger, and that she should pretend a dislike to it aggravated them all deeply—while all the time she was informed, both in sermons and in good books, that to do the duty nearest to your hand was the most heroic Christian duty. Poor Agnes could not see her way to do any duty at all. There were three sisters over sixteen, more than could be employed upon the stockings and the bread and butter. Then she tried the parish, but found with humiliation that with neither soup, nor puddings, nor little bottles of wine, nor even tracts to carry about, her visits were but little prized. Louisa, her next sister, answered better in every way than she did: when Louisa was scolded she scolded back again in a filial manner, having the last word always. She boxed the children's ears, and pushed them about, and read a novel—when she could get one—in an untidy room, with unkempt brothers and sisters round, and took no notice; neither the disobedience, nor the untidiness, nor even unjust reproof when it came her way having any particular effect upon her. Louisa did what she was obliged to do, and knew nothing about the ideal. But Agnes did not know what to make of herself. She was called by absurd nicknames of mock respect by the others—the “princess” and “your royal highness,” and so forth; and Mrs. Burchell seldom lost an opportunity of saying, “Agnes thinks she knows better, of course; but my old-fashioned ways are good enough for the rest of us.” Thus year after year went over her young head, each one increasing her inappropriateness—the want of any fit place for her where she was. It was against the pride of the family that she should go out as a governess, and, indeed, she was not sufficiently educated herself to teach any one else. She was at the very height of discomfort when there dawned upon her the prospect of doing something better in the “House,” serving the poor, teaching the untaught. The Rectory was very full at the time, and her room was much wanted for an uncle who was coming to pay a visit; but yet, notwithstanding this great immediate convenience, there was much resistance made.

Mr. Burchell's Church politics were undecided. He was only entering upon the path of Ritualism, starting mildly under the guidance of a curate, with Saint's-day services, and the beginning of a choir; and the name of a Sisterhood frightened him. As for Mrs. Burchell, her indignation knew no bounds. “Your duty is at home, you ungrateful girl, where your father and I have stinted ourselves to let you have everything that is comfortable. And now you go and leave me to work night and day among the children. I who have no strength for it—” “There is Louisa, mamma,” said Agnes; upon which Louisa cried with indignation, and asked if *everything* was to be left upon her—and all the little boys and girls looked on from the corners with demure delight to

watch the progress of the "shindy" between Agnes and mamma. At last, however, after many scenes of this kind, Agnes was allowed to go free. She went to London, and set herself up with a modified uniform, and was as glad and triumphant as if it was the noblest vocation in the world which she had thus struggled into. Alas, it was not very long before the bonds of the prosaic earth again galled her, and the ideal seemed as far off as ever. Ignoble breakfasts and dinners and teas are as ignoble in a charitable "House" as in an overcrowded Rectory; and here, too, there was gossip and unruliness, and want of discipline, and very poor success in the elevation of life out of its beggarly elements. To teach children their A B C is not an inspiring occupation, even when the children are destitute and orphans. It was so hard to realise that they were so. The poor little wretches were just as tiresome and insubordinate as if they had been her own brothers and sisters: nothing of the sentiment of their position hung about them. And the Sisters were extremely business-like, and did their duty without a tinge of romance, as if they had been hired to do it. The awakening had been sharp for Agnes, but she had already got beyond the first stage, and was now fighting with her disappointment and arguing herself back into satisfaction. It is impossible to tell what a help to her was the breaking of little Emmy's leg. It is an ill wind that blows nobody good. She would have liked to nurse her altogether, but at least to go to her to the hospital, to cheer her, and whisper consolation—that was something; and when the child's face brightened at her coming, Agnes, with a sudden throb of her heart, felt that at least for the moment here was the ideal for which she had sighed. Here was some real good of her. But for her nobody would have visited little Emmy; they would have been content to hear that she was doing well: that smile of half-celestial happiness upon the poor little sick face would never have reflected heaven but for Agnes. It was the first approach to contentment in her own occupation which she had ever felt. And she had to work all the harder to get herself this pleasure, which made her satisfaction still more warm.

But—whether it was right to talk to the stranger who was so very much interested in poor little Emmy afterwards!—was that a part of the ideal, too? To be sure he had a right to inquire—he had been present at the accident, and had carried the child in his arms to the hospital—how very kindly!—and talked with what understanding! and an enthusiasm which was balm to Agnes, and partially rekindled her own. That he should ask was quite natural; that he should walk with her back to the "House" had seemed very natural, too. Quite natural—he did not look as if he thought it a thing even to apologize about, but went on with quiet simplicity, going the same way as she did. Agnes felt that, as a young lady at home, it would have appeared perhaps a little odd that a stranger should have done this; but she reflected with a thrill, half of pleasure, half of annoyance, that the uniform of a Sister had its disad-

vantages as well as its advantages, and that while it protected her from all rudeness, it at the same time broke the ceremonial bonds of politeness and left her open to be addressed with frank simplicity by all classes of people. She had thought it right to let him know that she was not a Sister, but only a teacher, but it had made no difference in him. Perhaps (she explained to herself) it was the fact that there were nothing but women at the "House," which gave a certain piquancy to this conversation with a man; for the clergy, in their cassocks, were but a kind of half and half, and talked just in the same tone as Sister Mary Jane about the business of the "House," and subscriptions, and the balance-sheet, and what the Vicar thought, which was the final test of everything. Why did she like this stranger so much better than the clergy? It was because his tone and his looks and what he said were a little variety, and breathed of the outside world and the wider horizon. To be sure, it had seemed to her a little while ago that everything noblest and highest was to be had within the "House," where so many consecrated souls were giving themselves up to the service of God and the poor. But being inside had modified the views with which she had contemplated the "House" from without. The world itself, the wicked and foolish world, though no less foolish and wicked, had gained a certain interest. There was variety in it; it was perhaps more amusing than the "House." These thoughts filled the mind of Agnes as the door, which was always kept locked, was closed upon her. The horizon grew narrower as she came in—that was a natural effect, for of course four straight walls must cut out a great deal of sky—but the effect seemed greater than usual that day. She felt shut in; nothing could be easier than to unlock the door, though it looked so heavy—but there was a feeling of confinement somehow in the air. Agnes had to go into the severe Gothic room, with windows high in the wall, where the children were coming in to tea, while Mr. Oswald Meredith walked away in the free air as he pleased, holding his head high. She breathed a soft sigh unawares. Where was the ideal now? There came upon her a vision of the woods and the Hill, and the winding paths that led to it, and of the four winds that were always blowing there, and the leaves that answered to every breath. What a thing it would be to thread through the woods, as she had done so often, with the wind fresh in her face, chill but vigorous, breathing life and exhilaration! How one's ideal shifts and changes about when one is twenty! The "House" looked poor indeed in the weariful afternoon about the darkening, full of the odour of weak tea.

Things grew very serious, however, next week, when, exactly as it happened before, just as she came out of the hospital from her visit to Emmy, Mr. Oswald Meredith once more appeared. He was both sorry and glad in a breath—sorry to be too late for personal inquiries, glad to have been so fortunate as just to find her—the best authority about the child.

"I felt sure you would be going to see her," he said. "Little

Emmy is a lucky little girl. May I hear how she is getting on? though I scarcely deserve it for being so late."

He turned as he spoke to walk with her, and what could Agnes do? She could not refuse to answer him, or show any prudery. He evidently (she said to herself) thought nothing of it; why should she appear to demur to anything so simple? Give a report about a suffering child? any one might do that—to any one. And she told him that Emmy was making satisfactory progress, though she had been feverish and ill. "I was a little frightened, though the nurse said it was nothing. She wandered, and spoke so strangely for a little while. Poor little Emmy! She had a beautiful dream, and thought herself in heaven."

"While you were there?" said Oswald, with a significance in the simple question which covered her face with a sudden blush. Then she blushed deeper still to think what foolish, unpardonable vanity this was—vanity the most extraordinary, the most silly! What he meant, of course, was a simple question, most natural—an inquiry about a fact, not any wicked compliment. How Agnes hated and despised herself for the warm suffusion of shy pleasure which she had felt in her heart and on her face!

"Yes," she said, demurely; "but she soon roused up and came quite to herself. She had been in great pain, and they had given her something to deaden it, that was all."

"I quite understand," he said, with again that appearance of meaning more than he said. No doubt it was merely his way; and it was embarrassing, but not so disagreeable as perhaps it ought to have been. Agnes kept her head down, and slightly turned away, so that this stranger could not see the inappropriate blushes which came and went under the bonnet of the Sisterhood. Then there was a pause; and she wondered within herself whether it would be best to turn down a cross street, and feign an errand, which would take her out of the straight road to the "House"—evidently that was *his* way—and by this means she might escape his close attendance. But then to invent a fictitious errand would be unquestionably wrong; whereas to allow a gentleman whom she did not know, to walk along the public pavement, to which everybody had an equal right, by her side, was only problematically wrong. Thus Agnes hesitated, in a flutter, between two courses. So long as they were not talking it seemed more simple that he should be walking the same way.

"What a strange world a hospital must be," he said. "I have been watching the people coming out" ("Then he was not late, after all," Agnes remarked to herself), "some of them pleased, some anxious, but the most part indifferent. Indifference always carries the day. Is that why the world goes on so steadily, whatever happens? Here and there is one who shows some feeling——"

"It is because the greater part of the patients are not very ill," said Agnes, responding instantly to this challenge. "Oh, no, people are not

indifferent. I know that is what is said—that we eat our dinners in spite of everything——”

“And don’t we? or, rather, don’t they! Ourselves are always excepted, I suppose,” said Oswald, delighted to have set afloat one of those abstract discussions which young talkers, aware of a pleasant faculty of turning sentences, love.

“Why should ourselves be excepted?” said Agnes, forgetting her shyness. “Why should it always be supposed that we who speak are better than our neighbours? Oh, I have seen so much of that! people who know only a little, little circle setting down all the rest of the world as wicked. Why? If I am unhappy when any one I love is in trouble, that is a reason for believing that others are so too; not that others are indifferent——”

“Ah,” said Oswald, “to judge the world by yourself would be well for the world, but disappointing for you, I fear. I am an optimist, too; but I would not go so far as that.”

She gave him a sudden look, half-inquiring, half-impatient. “One knows more harm of one’s self than one can know of any one else,” she said, with the dogmatism of youth.

He laughed. “I see now why you judge people more leniently than I do. What quantities of harm I must know that *you* could not believe possible! What is life like, I wonder, up on those snowy heights so near the sky!—a beautiful soft psalm, with just a half tone wrong here and there to show that it is outside heaven——”

“Indeed, indeed, you are mistaken! I—I am not a Sister—you mistake me,” said Agnes, in agitation. “It is only the dress——”

“You are doing just what you condemn,” he said; “setting me down as a superficial person able to judge only by the outside; I have superior pretensions. Is my friend Sister Mary Jane the Superior of the convent? but I suppose you don’t call it a convent? I have only known them in France.”

“We call it only ‘the House;’ but I have never been in France,—— never out of England at all. Is it not like going into a different world?” Agnes took up this subject eagerly, to escape the embarrassment of the other; and fortunately the House itself was already in sight.

“The very same world, only differently dressed. I suppose there is something harmonious in a uniform. All the nuns have a kind of beauty, not the pensive kind one expects; or perhaps it is the white head-dress and the calm life that give the Sisters such pretty complexions, and such clear eyes. Sister Mary Jane, for instance—you will allow that the Sisters are calm——”

“But not indifferent!” said Agnes, moved to an answering smile as they reached the safe door of the House. She threw that smile at him as a farewell defiance as she went up to the locked door which opened to her with an alarming sound of keys turning, like the door of a true convent of romance, though it was in a London street. He lingered,

but she did not look back. She was very thankful to reach that safe shelter, and find herself delivered from the doubtful privilege of his attendance. And yet somehow the afternoon darkened suddenly, the sky clouded over as she went in, and her heart sank she could not tell how. Why should her heart sink? She had scarcely got indoors before she was met by Sister Mary Jane, who asked for little Emmy with business-like brevity; then, just pausing for a reply, went on to talk of work, the subject which filled all her thoughts.

"Go, please, and take care of the middle girls at relaxation: they are in St. Cecilia; and keep your eye on Marian Smith, who has already lost five marks for untidiness, and Araminta Blunt, who is in punishment for talking. And see that relaxation is ended, and they all begin learning their lessons at 6.30. I must take the elder girls myself for an hour before evensong. Have you had tea?" said Sister Mary Jane. "No? then go quickly, please, my dear, and have some. It is not cleared away yet. The infants have been rather unruly, and I mean to speak to the Vicar about it this evening. We want some one else to help with the infants. In St. Cecilia, yes. Make haste, my dear."

Agnes went into the large room which was called the refectory—the banqueting-hall of the establishment—where the air was heavy with tea and bread and butter, and the long tables, partially cleared, still bore traces of the repast. It was a large room; the walls enlivened with scriptural pictures, and rich with lines of coloured bricks unplastered. The servants of the House were not of a very superior class, as may be supposed, and to see them pushing about the cups and saucers, rattling down the heavy trays full of fragments, and hustling each other about the tables, was not exhilarating. How closed in and confined everything looked, how dreary the atmosphere, the evening so much more advanced than out of doors! Agnes tried to drink with contentment her lukewarm cup of tea, and to think with satisfaction of the middle girls who awaited her in St. Cecilia. But it was astonishing how difficult she felt it to do this. The summer afternoon skies, the soft breathing of the spring air, the long distances—though they were but lines of streets—and wide atmosphere—though it was tinged with London smoke—which lay outside these walls, had suggested sentiments so different. The sentiments which they would have suggested to Sister Mary Jane would have been quite unlike those that filled the mind of Agnes. She would have said it was a sweet evening, and hurried in to work. The smell of the tea did not sicken her, nor the sight of the used cups and the stains here and there on the cloth, where an unruly child (doomed to lose her marks for neatness) had pulled over her cup. She thought that to superintend the middle girls at relaxation was as pleasant an occupation as could be found—and that a walk through the streets was a weariness to the flesh. As for Mr. Oswald Meredith, except that it was very nice of him to have given such a good subscription to the House, she would not have considered him worthy a glance—her mind was busy about other things.

She had to take the girls for an hour before evensong, and afterwards had to look over their exercises and inspect the books, and hear the reports of the teachers. Araminta Blunt, who was in punishment for talking, and Marian Smith, who had lost five marks for untidiness, were of more interest to her than all the ideals in the world. She was very kind to fanciful Agnes, as well as to everybody else, but she had no time to indulge in fancies for her own part. She gave her directions to one and another as she went along the passage. There was not a minute of her valuable time which she could afford to lose. Agnes thought of all this with a sigh as she went to St. Cecilia, where the middle girls awaited her. Would she ever be as satisfied with her work, as pleased with her surroundings, as Sister Mary Jane? and was it not her duty to endeavour to make herself so? For she could not say to herself as she had done at home that this was mere carelessness and apathetic resignation to the common course of events. Here, on the contrary, it was self-sacrifice that was the rule, and consecration to the service of the helpless. The poor girl was young; perhaps that was the chief drawback in her way. The softness of the skies, the speculative delights of conversation, the look of Oswald Meredith as he spoke of "the snowy heights so near the sky," what had these mere chance circumstances, which she had encountered unawares, to do with the serious life which she had herself selected as the best? And, alas! was St. Cecilia, with the girls at relaxation, anything like those "snowy heights?" The little squabbles, the little fibs, the little jealousies which the children indulged in none the less for being in the interesting position of orphans, helpless and friendless children, with no father but God, jarred upon her more and more as this poetical imagination of her life came back to her mind. Surely he must be a poet. This was her concluding thought.

CHAPTER XXVI.

IN THE "HOUSE."

ROGER had not renewed his visit to Cara for some weeks. He had been too much cast down and discouraged by that first Sunday for which he had prepared so elaborately, and looked forward to with so much eagerness. But discouragement like everything else wears out, and when he had gone round the circle from anger to disapproval, from disapproval to contempt, from contempt to pity, Roger found himself with some surprise back at his original point, longing to see Cara, and ready to believe that anything that had come between them had been accidental. The two Merediths would not be there for ever, and Cara no doubt, poor girl, must be pining for some one from her old home, and would be glad to see him, and hear all that everybody was doing. He was sorry he had said a word to his mother about what happened in the Square; indeed

he had done nothing but regret ever since the indiscretion which tempted him to complain ; for Mrs. Burchell was one of those inconvenient persons who never forget the indignant criticisms of injured feeling, but continue to repeat and harp upon it long after that feeling has sunk into oblivion or changed into contempt. Very soon the softening influences of his early love, and the longing he had after the object of it, made Roger forgive Cara all her imagined sins against him ; but his mother could not forget that he had been slighted, and punished his betrayal of his wound by incessant reference to the evils in the Square. This of itself helped on his recovery, since to find fault yourself with those to whom you are attached is a very different thing from hearing them assailed by others. The process ended by a serious quarrel with Mrs. Burchell, who would not give up this favourite subject, and taunted her son with his want of proper pride, and inclination to put up with anything, when she heard of his intention to go back. "If I had been so treated anywhere, I would never go near them again. I would not invite people to trample upon me," cried the Rector's wife. "I might forgive, but I should never forget." "My dear," the Rector had said, "Roger has himself to look to : we are not able to do very much for him ; and Cara will be a kind of heiress. I should not mind any trifle of that sort, if he has serious views." "What do you call serious views?" cried Roger, ashamed and wretched, and he plunged out of the house without waiting for an answer, and betook himself to those wintry woods of which Agnes was thinking at the "House," and which even in winter were sweet. Roger had no sordid intentions, which was what his father meant by "serious" views, and though he was well enough satisfied with his daily work, and not, like Agnes, troubled by any ideal, yet he felt like his sister, the wretched downfall of existence into misery and meanness, between his mother's prolonged and exaggerated resentment and his father's serious worldliness. That boyish love of his was the highest thing in the young man's mind. If nothing else that was visionary existed in his nature, his semi-adoration of Cara, which had lasted as long as he could recollect, was visionary, a touch of poetry amid his prose, and to hear it opposed or to hear it sordidly encouraged alike shocked and revolted him. He resolved never to mention Cara's name again, nor to make any reference to the Square, to shut up his sentiments about her in his own bosom, whether these were sentiments of admiration or of offence. Supposing she was cold to him—and it would be very natural that she should be cold, as he had never gone back to her, nor visited her but once—he would bear it and make no sign ; never again would he subject her name to comments such as these. Fathers and mothers do badly by their children when they force them to such a resolution. Roger kept his word all through the weary Sunday, and did not say even that he would not return home for the next ; but he made his arrangements all the same.

When the next Sunday came, the heart of the aunt at Notting Hill was once more gladdened by the sight of him ; and in the afternoon he

duly set out for the Square. Perhaps his dress was not so elaborate nor his necktie so remarkable as when he first went there. He had sworn to himself that he would form no special expectations and make no grand preparations, and on the whole he was happier on his second visit. Miss Cherry, whom he found at the Square, was very glad to see him, and Mr. Beresford spoke to him kindly enough, and Cara was sweet and friendly. But they treated his visit as a call only; they did not ask him to dinner, which was a disappointment. They offered him a cup of tea, which Roger did not care for, being scarcely fashionable enough to like five-o'clock tea, and let him go when they went to dinner, forlorn enough, turning him out as it were upon the streets full of people. To be sure Roger had his aunt at Notting Hill, who was very glad to see him, who would give him supper and make him very comfortable. Still as he had hoped perhaps to be asked to stay, to spend the evening with Cara, it gave him a very forlorn sensation, when they bade him cheerfully good-by at the sound of the dinner-bell. He went out into the evening streets, where many people were going to church, and many coming back from their afternoon walk, going home to their families in twos and threes. Scarcely any one seemed to be alone but himself. Still he said to himself he had no right to grumble, for they had been kind—and next Sunday he would go again; and with this melancholy yet courageous resolution he made a little pause at the corner of the street asking himself where he should go now? His aunt would have taken tea, and gone to evening church before he could get to Notting Hill. So he changed his direction and went manfully the other way, to the "House," to visit his sister, arguing his disappointment down. Why should they have asked him to dinner? besides, he did not go for dinner, which would have been mercenary, but for Cara—and he had seen Cara, without those Merediths thrusting themselves into his way; and she had been very kind, and Miss Cherry had been kind, and there was no reason why he should not go again next Sunday afternoon. So why should he be discouraged? There was Agnes, whom he had not seen since she had gone into this "House," as they called it. It was only right that a man should go and look after his own sister, even if he did not approve of her. So Roger employed his undesired hour of leisure in the way of duty, and went to see Agnes, gradually calming himself down out of his disappointment on the way.

The Burchells were not what is called a family devoted to each other. They were good enough friends, and took a proper brotherly and sisterly interest in what happened to each other, especially as every new piece of family news brought a certain amount of enlivenment and variety and a new subject for conversation into the monotonous family life; but they were prosaic, and Agnes was the one among them whom the others did not understand much, and not understanding, set down bluntly as fantastic and incomprehensible. Had she fallen in love with somebody, or had a "disappointment," they would have entered to a certain degree into her feelings, and even now Roger could not quite divest himself of the

thought, that, though he knew nothing of it, something of this kind must at the root of her withdrawal from home. An ideal life, what was that? Neither Roger nor any of the rest understood what she could mean, or really believed that there was any sincerity in such a pretext; and he indeed was one of those who had been most opposed to her purpose; asking scornfully what advantage she supposed she was to get by going among strangers? Was she better than the other girls, that she could not make herself comfortable at home? Was there not plenty to do there, if that was what she wanted? Was there not the parish, if she wanted more work? Roger had been alike indignant and astonished. But the thing was done, and he was in town not very far off from where she was, with an hour or two to spare. He went with a secret antagonism against everything he was likely to see. The very name of the place nettled him. The "House!" as if it was a penitentiary or shelter for the destitute, which *his* sister had been obliged to find refuge in. He was admitted on giving full particulars as to who he was, and ushered into the bare little room, covered with dusty matting, with religious prints of the severest character on the walls, and bookshelves full of school-books. St. Monica was emblazoned on the door of it, which name offended him too. Could not the foolish people call it the brown room, or the matted room, or by any common appellation instead of by the name of a saint, whom nobody had ever heard of? Agnes came to him, not in the dress which she wore out of doors, but in a simple black gown, fortunately for her, for what avalanche of objections would have tumbled upon her head had she come in to him in her cape and poke bonnet! He was pleased to see his sister and pleased by her delight at the sight of him, but yet he could not smooth his brow out of displeasure. It gave him an outlet for the subdued irritation with which he had received his dismissal from the Square.

"Well, Agnes," he said, "so here you are in this papistical place. I had an hour to spare and I thought I would come and see you."

"I am so glad to see you, Roger. I was just thinking of them all at home."

"At home! You were anxious enough to get away from home. I wish any one knew why. I can't fancy anything so unnatural as a girl wishing to leave home, except on a visit, or if she is going to be married, or that sort of thing—but to come to a place like this! Agnes, I am sure there is no one belonging to you who knows why."

"Yes," said Agnes, quietly, "because I wanted to do something more, to do some duty in the world, not to be like a vegetable in the garden."

"That is just the slang of the period," said wise Roger. "You can't say there is not plenty to do with all the children to look after; and one never can get a button sewed on now."

"Louisa and Liddy were quite able to do all and more than all—why should there be three of us sewing on buttons? and what were we to come to—nothing but buttons all our lives?"

"Why, I suppose," said Roger, doubtfully—"what do girls ever come to? You would have been married some time."

"And that is such a delightful prospect!" cried Agnes, moved to sarcasm. "Oh, Roger, is it such an elevated life to jog along as papa—as we have seen people do, thinking of nothing but how to get through the day, and pay the bills, and have a good dinner when we can, and grumble at our neighbours, the children running wild, and the house getting shabby," said Agnes, unconsciously falling into portraiture, "and talking about the service of God? what is the service of God? is it just to be comfortable and do what you are obliged to do?"

"Well, I suppose it is not to make yourself uncomfortable," cried Roger, shirking the more serious question. "Though, as for that, if you wished, you could be quite uncomfortable enough at home. What do they mean by calling a room after a woman, St. Monica? and all these crucifixes and things—and that ridiculous dress—I am glad to see you have the sense not to wear it here at least."

"I wear it when I go out; it is not ridiculous; one can go where one pleases, that is, wherever one is wanted, in a Sister's dress, and the roughest people always respect it," said Agnes, warmly. "Oh, Roger, why should you be so prejudiced? do you know what kind of people are here? Poor helpless, friendless children, that have got no home, and the Sisters are like mothers to them. Is that no good? what does it matter about the name of the room, if a poor destitute baby is fed and warmed, and made happy in it? Children that would starve and beg and rob in the streets, or die—that would be the alternative, if these Sisters with their absurd dresses and their ridiculous ways, that make you so angry, did not step in."

"Well, I suppose they may do some good," said Roger, unwillingly. "You need not get so hot about it; but you might do just as much good with less fuss. And why should you shut yourself up in a penitentiary as if you had done something you were ashamed of? Why should you slave and teach for your living? We are not so poor as that. If the brothers all work," said Roger, with a not unbecoming glow of pride, "there ought always to be plenty for the sisters at home."

"But I must live my life too, as well as my brothers; and do what I can before the night comes," said Agnes, with a little solemnity, "when no man can work."

Roger was subdued by the quotation more than by all her reasons. He could not, as he said to himself, go against Scripture, which certainly did exhort every man to work before the night cometh. Did that mean every woman too?

"The short and the long of it is," he said, half sulky, half melted, "that you were never content at home, Agnes. Are you contented here?"

That was a home question. Agnes shrank a little and faltered, avoiding a direct reply.

"You do not look very contented yourself; have you been to see Cara?" she said. "How is she? I have not heard a word of her since I came here."

"Oh, Cara is well enough. She is not like you, setting up for eccentric work. She is quite happy at home. Miss Cherry is there at present, looking after her. It is a handsome house, choke full of china and things. And I suppose, from all I hear, she has a very jolly life," said Roger, with a certain shade of moroseness creeping over his face, "parties and lots of friends."

"I daresay she does not forget the people she used to like, for all that," said Agnes, more kind than he was, and divining the discontent in his face.

"Oh, I don't know. There are some people who never leave her alone, who pretend to be old friends too," said Roger, ruefully. "And they live next door, worse luck; they are always there. Other old friends have no chance beside these Merediths."

"Oh!—is their name Meredith?"

"Yes; do you know them? there is one, a palavering fellow, talks twenty to the dozen, and thinks no end of himself—a sneering beggar. I don't mind the other so much; but that Oswald fellow——"

"Oh!—is his name Oswald?"

"I believe you know him. Do swells like that come a-visiting here?"

"Oh, no," said Agnes, anxiously smoothing down suspicion, "there is a name—much the same—in Sister Mary Jane's list of subscriptions. Oh, yes; and the gentleman carried a poor child to the hospital so very kindly. I noticed the name, because—because there is a poet called Oswald, or Owen, or something, Meredith. I wondered," said Agnes, faltering, telling the truth but meaning a fib, "whether it could be the same."

"Quite likely," said Roger; "the very kind of fellow that would write poetry and stuff—a sentimental duffer. To tell the truth," he added, with immense seriousness, "I don't like to have little Cara exposed to all his rubbishing talk. She is as simple as a little angel, and believes all that's said to her; and when a fellow like that gets a girl into a corner, and whispers and talks stuff," Roger continued, growing red and wroth——

Agnes did not make any reply. She turned round to examine the school-books with a sudden start—and, oh me, what curious, sudden pang was that, as if an arrow had been suddenly shot at her, which struck right through her heart?

"Cara should not let any one whisper to her in corners," she said at last, with a little sharpness, after her first shock. "She is too young for anything of that sort; and she is old enough to know better," she added, more sharply still. But Roger did not notice this contradiction. He was too much interested to notice exactly what was said.

"She is too young to be exposed to all that," he said, mournfully;

"how is she to find out at seventeen which is false and which is true? There now, Agnes, see what you might have done, had not you shut yourself up here. Nothing so likely as that Cara would have asked you to go and pay her a visit—and you could have taken care of her. But you know how romantic poor dear Miss Cherry is—and I should not be a bit surprised if that child allowed herself to be taken in, and threw herself away."

And would this be the fault of Agnes, who had shut herself up in the House, and thus precluded all possibility of being chosen as the guardian and companion of Cara? She smiled a little to herself, not without a touch of bitterness; though, indeed, after all, if help to one's neighbour is the chief thing to be considered in life, it was as worthy a work to take care of Cara as to teach the orphans their a, b, c. This news of Roger's, however, introduced, he did not well know how, a discord in the talk. He fell musing upon the risk to which his little lady was exposed, and she got distracted with other thoughts. She sat beside him, in her plain, long black gown, every ornament of her girlhood put away from her; her hands, which had been very pretty white hands, loosely clasped on the table before her, and showing some signs of injury. It is only in romances that the hands of women engaged in various household labours retain their beauty all the same. Agnes had now a little of everything thrown in her way to do, and was required not to be squeamish about the uses she put these pretty hands to; and it could not be denied that they were a little less pretty already. She looked down upon them in her sudden rush of thought and perceived this. What did it matter to the young handmaid of the poor whether or not her hands were as pretty as usual? but yet, with an instantaneous comparison, her mind rushed to Cara, who had no necessity to soil her pretty fingers, and to the contrast which might be made between them. What did it matter that it was wicked and wrong of Agnes, self-devoted and aspiring to be God's servant, to feel like this? The wave of nature was too strong for her, and carried her away.

"Well, I must be going," said Roger, with a sigh. "I am glad that I have seen you, and found you—comfortable. There does not seem much here to tempt any one; but still if you like it—I am coming back next Sunday. Aunt Mary is pleased to have me, and they don't seem to care at home whether one goes or stays. I shall probably look in at the Square. Shall I tell Cara about you? She knows you have gone away from home, but not where you are. She might come to see you."

"I don't want any visitors," said Agnes, with a little irritation of feeling, which, with all the rest of her misdeeds, was laid up in her mind to be repented of. "We have no time for them, for one thing; and half measures are of little use. If I do not mean to give myself altogether to my work, I had better not have come at all. Do not mention my name to Cara. I don't want to see any one here."

"Well, I suppose you are right," said Roger; "if one does go in for

this sort of thing, it is best to do it thoroughly. What is that fearful little cracked kettle of a bell? You that used to be so particular, and disliked the row of the children, and the loud talking, and the bad music, how can you put up with all this? You must be changed somehow since you came here."

"I ought to be changed," said Agnes, with a pang in her heart. Alas, how little changed she was! how the sharp little bell wore her nerves out, and the rustle of the children preparing for chapel, and the clanging of all the doors. She went with Roger to the gate, which had to be unlocked, to his suppressed derision.

"Have you to be locked in?" the irreverent youth said. "Do they think you would all run away if you had the chance?"

Agnes took no notice of this unkind question. She herself, when she first arrived, had been a little appalled by the big mediæval key, emblem, apparently, of a very tremendous separation from the world; and she would not acknowledge that it meant no more than any innocent latch. When Roger was gone, she had to hasten upstairs to get her poke bonnet, and rush down again to take her place among her orphans for the evening service in the chapel, which the House took pleasure in calling Evening-song. She knelt down among the rustling, restless children, while the cracked bell jangled, and a funny little procession of priests and choristers came from the vestry door. They were all the most excellent people in the world, and worthy of reverence in their way; but no procession of theatrical *supers* was ever more quaintly comic than that which solemnly marched half way round the homely little chapel of the House, chanting a hymn very much out of tune, and ending in the best of curates—a good man, worthy of any crowning, civic or sacred, who loved the poor, and whom the poor loved, but who loved the ceremonial of these comic-solemn processions almost more than the poor—With a simple complaisant sense of what he was doing for the Church, this good man paced slowly past the kneeling figure of the young teacher, motionless in her black drapery, with her head bent down upon her hands. No mediæval Pope, in full certainty of conducting the most impressive ceremonial in the world, could have been more sincerely convinced of the solemnising effect of his progress, or more simply impressed by its spiritual grandeur; and no mediæval nun, in passionate penitence over a broken vow, could have been more utterly bowed down and prostrate than poor Agnes Burchell, guilty of having been beguiled by the pleasant voice and pleasant looks of Oswald Meredith into the dawn of innocent interest in that mundane person: she, who had so short time since offered herself to God's service—she, who had made up her mind that to live an ideal life of high duty and self-sacrifice was better than the poor thing which vulgar minds called happiness. The cracked bell tinkled, and the rude choristers chanted, and all the restless children rustled about her, distracting her nerves and her attention. All this outside of devotion, she said to herself, and a heart distracted with vulgar vanities within! Was this the

ideal to which she had vowed herself—the dream of a higher life? The children pulled at her black cloak in consternation, and whispered, “Teacher, teacher!” when the service began, and she had to stumble up to her feet, and try to keep them somewhere near the time in their singing. But her mind was too disturbed to follow the hymn, which was a very ecstatic one about the joys of Paradise. Oh, wicked, wicked Agnes! what was she doing, she asked herself—a wolf in sheep’s clothing amid this angelic band?

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE WOLF IN SHEEP’S CLOTHING.

THIS was a time of great agitation for the two houses so close to each other, with only a wall dividing the troubles of the one from the excitement of the other, and a kind of strange union between them, linking them more closely in the very attempt at disjunction. The greater part of the private commotion which was going on, as it were, underground, was concealed from Cara as not a proper subject of discussion before her; but it was not necessary to take any steps of the kind with Oswald, who, in his light-hearted indifference, ignored it comfortab’y, and followed his own devices through the whole without giving the other affairs a thought. After all, the idea of any one exciting him or herself over the question whether a respectable old fogey, like Mr. Beresford, should go on paying perpetual visits to a respectable matron like his mother, touched Oswald’s mind with a sense of the ludicrous which surmounted all seriousness. If they liked it, what possible harm could there be? He had not the uneasy prick of wounded feeling, the sense of profanation which moved Edward at the idea of his mother’s conduct being questioned in any way. Oswald was fond of his mother, and proud of her, though he was disposed to smile at her absurd popularity and the admiration she excited among her friends. He would have thought it a great deal more natural that he himself should be the object of attraction; but, granting the curious taste of society, at which he felt disposed to laugh, it rather pleased him that *his* mother should be so popular, still admired and followed at her age. He thought, like Mr. Sommerville, that she was something of a humbug, getting up that pretence of sympathy with everybody, which it was impossible any one in her senses could feel. But so long as it brought its reward, in the shape of so much friendliness from everybody, and gratitude for the words and smiles, which cost nothing, Oswald, at least, saw no reason to complain. And as for scandal arising about Mr. Beresford! he could not but laugh; at their age! So he pursued his easy way as usual, serenely light-hearted, and too much occupied with his own affairs to care much for other people’s. In addition to this, it must be added that Oswald was falling very deep in love. These interviews between the hospital and the House were but meagre fare to feed a passion upon; but

the very slightness of the link, the oddity of the circumstances, everything about it delighted the young man, who had already gone through a great many drawing-room flirtations, and required the help of something more piquant. He was very happy while they were all so agitated and uncomfortable. Twice a week were hospital days, at which he might hope to see her; and almost every morning now he managed to cross the path of the little school procession, and, at least see her, if he did not always catch the eye of the demure little teacher in her long black cloak. Sometimes she would look at him sternly, sometimes she gave him a semi-indignant, sometimes a wholly friendly glance, sometimes he feared, did not perceive him at all. But that was not Oswald's fault. He made a point of taking off his hat, and indeed holding it in his hand a moment longer than was necessary, by way of showing his respect, whether she showed any signs of perceiving him or not. She went softly along the vulgar pavement, with steps which he thought he could distinguish among all the others, ringing upon the stones with a little rhythm of her own, about which he immediately wrote some verses. All this he would tell to Cara, coming to her in the morning before he set out to watch the children defiling out of the House. And all the world thought, as was natural, that the subject of these talks was his love for Cara, not his love, confided to Cara, for some one else.

As for Agnes, she not only saw Oswald every time he made his appearance, whether she allowed him to know it or not, but she felt his presence in every nerve and vein, with anger for the first day or two after Roger's visit, then with a softening of all her heart towards him as she caught his reverential glance, his eager appeal to her attention. After all, whispers to Cara, whom he had known all her life—little Cara, who even to Agnes herself seemed a child—could not mean half so much as this daily haunting of her own walks, this perpetual appearance wherever she was. That was a totally different question from her own struggle not to notice him, not to think of him. The fact that it was shocking and terrible on her part to allow her mind to dwell on any man, or any man's attentions, while occupied in the work to which she had devoted herself, and filling almost the position of a consecrated Sister, was quite a different thing from the question whether he was a false and untrustworthy person, following her with the devices of vulgar pursuit, a thing too impious to think of, too humiliating. Agnes was anxious to acquit the man who admired and sought her, as well as determined to reject his admiration; and, for the moment, the first was actually the more important matter of the two. Herself she could be sure of. She had not put her hand to the plough merely to turn back. She was not going to abandon her ideal at the call of the first lover who held out his hand to her. Surely not; there could be no doubt on that subject; but that this generous, gentle young man, with those poetic sentiments which had charmed yet abashed her mind, that he should be false to his fair exterior, and mean something unlovely and untrue, instead of a real devotion, that

was too terrible to believe. Therefore, she did not altogether refuse to reply to Oswald's inquiries when the next hospital day brought about another meeting. This time he did not even pretend that the meeting was accidental, that he had been too late for making the proper inquiries in his own person, but went up to her, eagerly asking for "our little patient," with all the openess of a recognised acquaintance.

"Emmy is better—if you mean Emmy," said Agnes, with great state. "The fever is gone, and I hope she will soon be well."

"Poor little Emmy," said Oswald; "but I don't want her to be well too soon—that is, it would not do to hurry her recovery. She must want a great deal of care still."

He hoped she would smile at this, or else take it literally and reply seriously; but Agnes did neither. She walked on, with a stately air, quickening her pace slightly, but not so as to look as if she were trying to escape.

"I suppose, as the fever is gone, she has ceased to imagine herself in heaven," said Oswald. "Happy child! when sickness has such illusions, it is a pity to be well. We are not so well off in our commonplace life."

He thought she would have responded to the temptation and turned upon him to ask what he meant by calling life commonplace; and indeed the wish stirred Agnes so that she had to quicken her pace in order to resist the bait thus offered. She said nothing, however, to Oswald's great discomfiture, who felt that nothing was so bad as silence, and did not know how to overcome the blank, which had more effect on his lively temperament than any amount of disapproval and opposition. But he made another valorous effort before he would complain.

"Yours, however, is not a commonplace life," he said. "We worldlings pay for our ease by the sense that we are living more or less ignobly, but it must be very different with you who are doing good always. Only, forgive me, is there not a want of a little pleasure, a little colour, a little brightness? The world is so beautiful," said Oswald, his voice slightly faltering, not so much from feeling, as from fear that he might be venturing on dubious ground. "And *we* are so young."

That pronoun, so softly said, with such a tender emphasis and meaning, so much more than was ever put into two letters before, went to the heart of Agnes. She was trying so hard to be angry with him, trying to shut herself against the insinuating tone of his voice, and those attempts to beguile her into conversation. All the theoretical fervour that was in her mind had been boiling up to reply, and perhaps her resolution would not have been strong enough to restrain her, had not that *we* come in, taking the words from her lips and the strength from her mind. She could neither protest against the wickedness and weakness of consenting to live an ignoble life, nor indignantly declare that there was already more than pleasure, happiness, and delight in the path of self-sacrifice, when all the force was stolen out of her by that tiny

monosyllable—*we*! How dared he identify himself with her? draw her into union with him by that little melting yet binding word? She went on faster than ever in the agitation of her thoughts, and was scarcely conscious that she made him no answer; though surely what he had said called for some reply.

Oswald was at his wit's end. He did not know what to say more. He made a little pause for some answer, and then getting none, suddenly changed his tone into one of pathetic appeal. "Are you angry with me?" he said. "What have I done? Don't you mean to speak to me any more?"

"Yes," she said, turning suddenly round, so that he could not tell which of his questions she was answering. "I am vexed that you will come with me. Gentlemen do not insist on walking with ladies to whom they have not been introduced—whom they have met only by chance—"

He stopped short suddenly, moved by the accusation: but unfortunately Agnes too, startled by his start, stopped also, and gave him a curious, half-defiant, half-appealing look, as if asking what he was going to do; and this look took away all the irritation which her words had produced. He proceeded to excuse himself, walking on, but at a slower pace, compelling her to wait for him—for it did not occur to Agnes, though she had protested against his company, to take the remedy into her own hands, and be so rude as to break away.

"What could I do?" he said piteously. "You would not tell me even your name—you know mine. I don't know how to address you, nor how to seek acquaintance in all the proper forms. It is no fault of mine."

This confused Agnes by a dialectic artifice for which she was not prepared. He gave a very plausible reason, not for the direct accusation against him, but for a lesser collateral fault. She had to pause for a moment before she could see her way out of the maze. "I did not mean that. I meant you should not come at all," she said.

"Ah! you cannot surely be so hard upon me," cried Oswald, in real terror, for it had not occurred to him that she would, in cold blood, send him away. "Don't banish me!" he cried. "Tell me what I am to do for the introduction—where am I to go? I will do anything. Is it my fault that I did not know you till that day?—till that good child, bless her, broke her leg. I shall always be grateful to poor little Emmy. She shall have a crutch of gold if she likes. She shall never want anything I can give her. Do you think I don't feel the want of that formula of an introduction? With that I should be happy. I should be able to see you at other times than hospital days, in other places than the streets. The streets are beautiful ever since I knew you," cried the young man, warming with his own words, which made him feel the whole situation much more forcibly than before, and moved him at least, whether they moved her or not.

"Oh!" cried Agnes, in distress, "you must not talk to me so. You must not come with me, Mr. Meredith; is not my dress enough——"

"There now!" he said, "see what a disadvantage I am under. I dare not call you Agnes, which is the only sweet name I know. And your dress! You told me yourself you were not a sister."

"It is quite true," she said, looking at him, trying another experiment. "I am a poor teacher, quite out of your sphere."

"But then, fortunately, I am not poor," said Oswald, almost gaily, in sudden triumph. "Only tell me where your people are, where I am to go for that introduction. I thank thee, Lady Agnes, Princess Agnes, for teaching me that word. I will get my introduction or die."

"Oh, here we are at the House!" she cried suddenly, in a low tone of horror, and darted away from him up the steps to the open door. Sister Mary Jane was standing there unsuspecting, but visibly surprised. She had just parted with some one, whom poor Agnes, in her terror, ran against; for in the warmth of the discussion they had come up to the very gate of the House, the entrance to that sanctuary where lovers were unknown. Sister Mary Jane opened a pair of large blue eyes, which Oswald (being full of admiration for all things that were admirable) had already noted, and gazed at him, bewildered, letting Agnes pass without comment. He took off his hat with his most winning look of admiring respectfulness as he went on—no harm in winning over Sister Mary Jane, who was a fair and comely Sister, though no longer young. Would Agnes, he wondered, have the worldly wisdom to make out that he was an old acquaintance, or would she confess the truth? Would Sister Mary Jane prove a dragon, or, softened by her own beauty and the recollection of past homages, excuse the culprit? Oswald knew very well that anyhow, while he walked off unblamed and unblamable, the girl who had been only passive, and guilty of no more than the mildest indiscretion, would have to suffer more or less. This, however, did not move him to any regret for having compromised her. It rather amused him, and seemed to give him a hold over her. She could not take such high ground now and order him away. She was in the same boat, so to speak. Next time they met, she would have something to tell which he would almost have a right to know. It was the establishing of confidence between them. Oswald did not reckon at a very serious rate the suffering that might arise from Sister Mary Jane's rebuke. "They have no thumbscrews in those new convents, and they don't build girls up in holes in the walls now-a-days," he said to himself, and, on the whole, the incident was less likely to end in harm than in good.

Agnes did not think so, who rushed in—not to her room, which would have been a little comfort, but to the curtained corner of the dormitory, from which she superintended night and day "the middle girls," who were her charge, and where she was always afraid of some small pair of peeping eyes prying upon her seclusion. She threw off her bonnet, and flung herself on her knees by the side of her little bed. "Oh, what a farce it was," she thought, to cover such feelings as surged in her heart under the demure drapery of that black cloak, or to tie the conventual

bonnet over cheeks that burned with blushes, called there by such words as she had been hearing ! She bent down her face upon the coverlet and cried as if her heart would break, praying for forgiveness, though these same foolish words would run in and out of her prayers, mixing with her heart broken expressions of penitence in the most bewildering medley. After all, there was no such dreadful harm done. She was not a Sister, nor had she ever intended to be a Sister, but that very simple reflectiveness afforded the fanciful girl no comfort. She had come here to seek a higher life, and lo, at once, at the first temptation, had fallen—fallen, into what ? Into the foolishness of the foolishest girl without an ideal—she whose whole soul had longed to lay hold on the ideal, to get into some higher atmosphere, on some loftier level of existence. It was not Sister Mary Jane she was afraid of, it was herself whom she had so offended ; for already, could it be possible ? insidious traitors in her heart had begun to ply her with suggestions of other kinds of perfection ; wicked lines of poetry stole into her head, foolish stories came to her recollection. Oh ! even praying, even penitence were not enough to keep out this strife. She sprang to her feet, and rushed to St. Cecilia, the room which was her battle-ground, and where the noise of the girls putting away their books and work, and preparing to go to tea, promised her exemption, for a little while at least, from any possibility of thought. But Agnes was not to be let off so easily. In the passage she met Sister Mary Jane. “ I was just going to send for you,” said the Sister, benign but serious. “ Come to my room, Agnes. Sister Sarah Ann will take the children to tea.”

Agnes followed, with her heart, she thought, standing still. But it would be a relief to be scolded, to be delivered from the demon of self-reproach in her own bosom. Sister Mary Jane seated herself at a table covered with school-books and account-books, in the little bare room, laid with matting, which was all the House afforded for the comfort of its rulers. She pointed to a low seat which all the elder girls knew well, which was the stool of repentance for the community. “ My dear,” said Sister Mary Jane, “ did you know that gentleman in the world ? Tell me truly, Agnes. You are only an associate : you are not under our rule, and there is no harm in speaking to an acquaintance. But so long as any one wears our dress, there must be a certain amount of care. Did you know him, my dear, tell me, in the world ? ”

Agnes could not meet these serious eyes. Her head drooped upon her breast. She began to cry. “ I do not think it was my fault. Oh, I have been wrong, but I did not mean it. It was not my fault.”

“ That is not an answer, my dear,” said Sister Mary Jane.

And then the whole story came rushing forth with sobs and excuses and self-accusations all in one. “ It is the badness in my heart. I want to be above the world, but I cannot. Things come into my mind that I don't want to think. I would rather, far rather, be devoted to my work, and think of nothing else, like you, Sister Mary Jane. And then I get tempted to talk, to give my opinion. I was always fond of conversation.

Tell me what to do to keep my course straight, to be like you. Oh, if I could keep steady and think only of one thing. It is my thoughts that run off in every direction : it is not this gentleman. Oh, what can one do when one's heart is so wrong !”

Sister Mary Jane listened with a smile. Oswald's confidence in her beautiful eyes was perhaps not misplaced. And probably she was conscious now and then of thinking of something else as much as her penitent. She said, “My dear, I don't think you have a vocation. I never thought it. A girl may be a very good girl and not have a vocation. So you need not be very unhappy if your thoughts wander ; all of us have not the same gifts. But, Agnes, even if you were in the world, instead of being in this house, which should make you more careful, you would not let a gentleman talk to you whom you did not know. You must not do it again.”

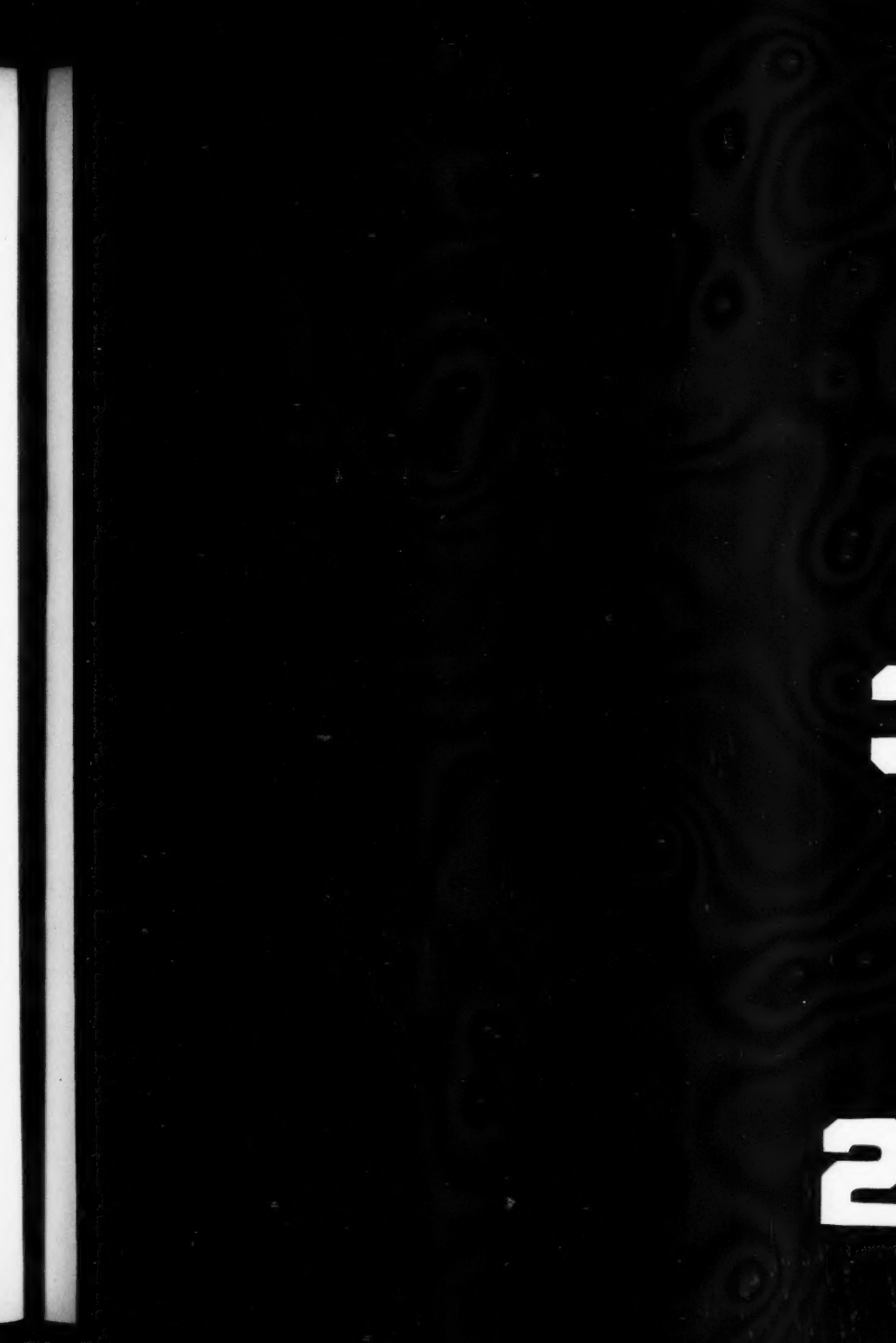
“It was not meant badly,” said Agnes, veering to self-defence. “He wanted to know how little Emmy was. It was the gentleman who carried her to the hospital. It was kindness, it was not meant for——”

“Yes, I saw who it was. And I can understand how it came about. But it is so easy to let an acquaintance spring up, and so difficult to end it when it has taken root. Perhaps, my dear, you had better not go to little Emmy again.”

“Oh !” Agnes gave a cry of remonstrance and protest. It did not hurt her to be told not to speak to him any more—but not to go to little Emmy ! She was not sure herself that it was all for little Emmy's sake, and this made her still more unhappy, but not willing to relinquish the expedition. Sister Mary Jane, however, took no notice of the cry. She put a heap of exercises into Agnes's hands to be corrected. “They must all be done to-night,” she said, calculating with benevolent severity that this would occupy all the available time till bed-time. “One nail drives out another,” she said to herself, being an accomplished person, with strange tongues at her command. And thus she sent the culprit away, exhausted with tears and supplied with work. “I will send you some tea to St. Monica, where you can be quiet,” she said. And there Agnes toiled all the evening over her exercises, and had not a moment to spare. “Occupation, occupation,” said the Sister to herself ; “that is the only thing. She will do very well if she has no time to think.”

But was that the ideal life ? I doubt if Sister Mary Jane thought so ; but she was old enough to understand the need of such props, which Agnes was still young enough to have indignantly repudiated. For her part, Agnes felt that a little more thought would save her. If she could get vain imaginations out of her head, and those scraps of poetry, and bits of foolish novels, and replace them with real thought—thought upon serious subjects, something worthy the name—how soon would all those confusing, tantalizing shadows flee away ! But, in the meantime, it is undeniable that the girl left this interview with a sense of relief, such as, it is to be supposed, is one of the chief reasons why confession continues to

hold its place, named or nameless, in all religious communions more or less. Sister Mary Jane was not the spiritual director of the community, though I think the place would have very well become her; but it was undeniable that the mind of Agnes was lightened after she had poured forth her burdens; also that her sin did not look quite so heinous as it had done before; also, that the despair which had enveloped her, and of which the consciousness that she must never so sin again formed no inconsiderable part, was imperceptibly dispelled, and the future as well as the past made less gloomy. Perhaps, if any very searching inspection had been made into those recesses of her soul which were but imperfectly known to Agnes herself, it might have been read there that there was no longer any crushing weight of certainty as to the absolute cessation of the sin; but that was beyond the reach of investigation. Anyhow, she had no time to think any more. Never had exercises so bad come under the young teacher's inspection; her brain reeled over the mis-spellings, the misunderstandings. Healthy human ignorance, indifference, opacity, desire to get done anyhow, could not have shown to greater advantage. They entirely carried out the intentions of Sister Mary Jane, and left her not a moment for thought, until she got to her recess in the dormitory. And then, after the whisperings were all hushed, and the lights extinguished, Agnes was too tired for anything but sleep—a result of occupation which the wise Sister was well aware of too. Indeed, everything turned out so well in the case of this young penitent, that Sister Mary Jane deemed it advisable not to interfere with the visits to the hospital. If she surmounted temptation, why then she was safe; if not, other steps must be taken. Anyhow, it was well that her highly wrought feelings and desire of excellence should be put to the test; and as Agnes was not even a Postulant, but still in “the world,” an unwise backsliding of this kind was less important. No real harm could come to her. Nevertheless, Sister Mary Jane watched her slim figure disappear along the street from her window with unusual interest. Was it mere interest in little Emmy that had made the girl so anxious to go, or was she eager to encounter the test and try her own strength? Or was there still another reason, a wish more weak, more human, more girlish? Agnes walked on very quickly, pleased to find herself at liberty. She was proud of the little patient, whose small face brightened with delight at the sight of her. And she did not like the sensation of being shut up out of danger, and saved arbitrarily from temptation. Her heart rose with determination to keep her own pure ideal path, whatever solicitations or blandishments might assail her. And indeed, to Agnes, as to a knight of romance, it is not to be denied that “the danger's self was lure alone.”



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